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ESSAYS

ON THE

Literature, Superstitions, and History

OF

ENGLAND IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

ESSAYS

ON SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE

LITERATURE, POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS,

AND

HISTORY

OF

England in the Middle Ages.

BY

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ESSAYS

ON THE

LITERATURE, ETC. OF ENGLAND

DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

ESSAY X.

ON FRIAR RUSH AND THE FROLICSOME ELVES.

THE character and form of the unpremeditated creations of man's imagination depend as much upon external circumstances, and upon impressions from without, as upon the variation of character in man himself. The ferocity of Scandinavian or Gothic heroes could admit into their mystic creed no beings but those which inspired awe and terror, because it was unaccustomed to the quiet enjoyments of peace, to pleasant meadows or laughing glens; it contemplated only steel, and wounds, and blood. The wild hunter, who tracked his prey over the barren mountains which were as much his home as that of the beasts he pursued, to whom nature presented herself in her most gigantic and awful forms, himself acquainted only with danger, must have a creed which partook of the character of everything around him —the supernatural world was to him peopled with fierce

and malignant demons. Just so the solitary hermit, who in the earlier ages of western Christianity fixed his abode in the deserts and the fens, rude and inhospitable tracts, could conceive them to be peopled by nothing but devils. But to the peaceful peasant, on whom nature ever smiled in her most joyous mood, she was peopled by gay and harmless spirits, who like himself loved to play and laugh—the beings *he* feared were restricted to the mountains whose heads rose in the dim distance, or their visits were confined within the darkness of night.

Thus, the only beings with whom a Beowulf would claim acquaintance were those against whom he might signalize his valour, the nickers who set upon him in the sea amidst the fury of the tempest, the grendel, the nightly devourer of royal thanes, and the fire-drake whose vengeance carried destruction amongst his subjects. The literature which these remote ages have left us is not of that kind which would indicate to us the lighter superstitions of our forefathers. The impressions of fear are deeper and more permanent than those of mirth, and are more speedily communicated. The monks, whose greatest error was not that of scepticism, partook in all the superstitions of the vulgar—they disbelieved none of the fables of paganism, but they looked upon them in a new light. To them all spirits were either angels or devils, and as their canons assured them that the beings of the vulgar creed, which were in fact the remains of paganism, were not to be admitted into the former class, they threw them indiscriminately into the latter. The creed of the monks could naturally admit of no harmless devils, of none who played for the sake of play alone, and the pranks and gambols and mischievous tricks of a puck or a hobgoblin were only so many modes by which the evil

one sought to allure the simple countryman into his power, to lead him to temptation and sin. But the playful freaks of Satan were not so often performed before the monks themselves, and therefore seldom found a place in their legends. The fears of the peasantry, on the other hand, were soon imparted to their spiritual teachers, and the latter were, or believed themselves to be, constantly persecuted by the malignity of the demons. It is our impression, indeed, that the monkish superstitions were entirely founded upon the older popular superstitions: instead of fighting against the errors of paganism, they soon fell themselves into that of supposing that they were engaged in a more substantial war against the spirits who belonged to the older creed, and whose interest it would be to support it. Thus, in their eagerness for the battle, they created their opponents. As the monks were generally successful in these encounters, they became bolder, and resolved to attack the enemy in his stronghold, seeking solitary residences among the fens and wilds. Hence, perhaps, arose in some degree the passion for becoming hermits. From all these circumstances it arises that, in the legends of the monks, although it is the creed of the peasantry which is presented to us, yet that creed is there so distorted and so partially represented as to be with difficulty recognized.

We have thus but little knowledge of the mirthful beings, the Pucks and Robin Goodfellows, of the peasantry, during the earlier ages of our history. That the popular mythology included such beings we have abundant proofs in the numerous allusions to them at a somewhat later period, namely, the twelfth century, after which the traces of them again nearly disappear, until the period when the invention of printing, and the consequent facility of making books,

created a literature for the vulgar, and when the stories of their popular belief which had hitherto been preserved orally were collected for their diversion. Then we find that, as in earlier ages separate ballads had been woven together into epic cycles, so these popular stories were strung together, and a certain character of reality given to them in the person of a single hero, a Robin Goodfellow, a Hudekin, or, as in the curious tract of which we are going to speak, a Friar Rush. The sudden appearance of these stories and collections of stories gives rise to problems relating to their formation, which the want of a sufficient acquaintance with the stories in their earlier form renders it sometimes difficult to resolve; and it is only by an historical comparison of our scanty data that we can arrive at any satisfactory knowledge of the nature and sources of the materials of which they are composed.

In this research, we must not reject even the legends of the monks, for they sometimes illustrate the lighter superstitions of our peasantry, as we may easily enough suppose, because, so long as the monks believed the imaginary pranks of the hobgoblins to be so many temptations of the evil one, there was no reason why, though they were generally subjected to severer trials, he should not at times practise upon them the same jokes, by way of diversifying his attacks. When the great Luther could believe a girl

* See Michelet's interesting work, the *Mémoires de Luther*, 1836, tom. 3, p. 170. The alchemists and the rosicrucians even in the seventeenth century reproduced the superstitions of the monks and peasantry of an earlier period. In the MS. Harl. 6482 (17th century), a most extensive collection of the doctrines of these people, we have the following account of the hobgoblins. "Of spirits called Hobgoblins or Robin Goodfellowes. These kinde of spirits are more familiar and

to be possessed by "a jovial spirit," * we may easily pardon the monks if we sometimes find them in their legends subjected to temptations of the evil one which are very equivocal in their nature, and in which he shows himself in a no less equivocal form. Indeed in some of these temptations it is difficult to say what was the harm intended, and we can only explain the monkish story by translating it into the language and creed of the peasantry, and by introducing Robin Goodfellow upon the stage. As an example we will take a saint of the twelfth century, because we have abundant authorities to prove that the frolicsome elves then held their place in the popular mythology. Every one must have heard of St. Godric and his solitary hermitage at Finchale, near Durham, on the banks of the Wear, a spot too wild not to be haunted by hosts of hobgoblins. Generally speaking, though it is certain that they led him a very uneasy life, Godric seems to have been too strong or too cunning for his spiritual tormentors. In one instance, according to a story told in the first volume, (p. 264,) a goblin appeared to him in the night, and told him that by digging in a certain place he would find a treasure. Godric was not covetous, but he thought it would be a

* domestical than others, and, for some causes to us unknown, abide in one place more than in another, so that some never almost depart from some particular houses, as though they were their proper mansions, making in them sundry noises, rumours, mockeries, gawds, and gests, without doing any harme at all, and some have heard them play on gitterns and jews' harps, and ring bells, and make answer to those that call them, and speak with certain signs, laughters, and merry gestures, so that those of the house come at last to be so familiar and well acquainted with them that they fear them not at all." The writer goes on to say that, though they seem harmless, they would do harm if they could, and that everybody ought to be on his guard against them.

more Christianlike act, to take the money and distribute it among the poor, than to let it lie buried in the earth—he believed the evil one, in spite of the admonitions of his faith which characterized him as a liar from the beginning, —but out of the hole which he dug, instead of treasure, there came a troop of elves, who laughed at the hermit and fled away. Godric's chief employment was digging in his garden. One day, while he was at work, came a man whose stature and appearance were sufficient to create suspicion—he reproached Godric with idleness, and the saint, who was again deceived, gave him his spade, and allowed him to proceed in his work, while he himself went to his devotions. On his return, he found to his astonishment that the stranger in the course of an hour had done the work of eight days. With the sacred images which were in his book he put to flight the evil one, and he made the earth which had been dug do penance by lying fallow for seven years.*

If we look upon the two foregoing stories as mere saints' legends, they are out of their place, and appear to us to have no object—the whole amount of the evil done or intended by the devil was but a merry frolic; but when we look upon them in another light, when we consider that Godric himself was but a peasant, and that naturally

* The life of Godric is given in Capgrave, *Legenda Nova Angl.*—but there exists in MS. a life much longer and very interesting, written by a person who conversed with the hermit, MS. Harl. No. 2277. The digging story is found in the MS. at fol. 48, v°., in Capgrave, fol. clx. v°., Ed. Wynk. de Worde. The treasure legend occurs, at fol. 60, v°., in the MS. (Capg. fol. clxiij, v°.) The elves mentioned in the latter were very small and black, which was their general colour in the monkish stories. Godric often saw such elves, see the MS. fol. 62.

enough he partook in the superstitions of his fellows, we recognize in the first a treasure legend, one which may be compared with any of those in Crofton Croker's Irish Tales, and in the tall gentleman who dug so efficiently there can be no doubt that we have the laborious elf, the Scottish Brownie, the Portunus of Gervase of Tilbury; who, in the same century, tells us that these spirits, when they found anything undone in the house they entered at night, fell to work and finished it in an inconceivably short space of time (si quid gestandum in domo fuerit, aut onerosi operis agendum, ad operandum se jungunt, citius humana facilitate expediunt.) Godric was frequently a witness of the playful rogueries of the demon, as well when performed upon others as upon himself (MS. Harl. fol. 47, v°.), and on one occasion the evil one amused himself, and no doubt the saint also, by dancing before him most ludicrously in the form of a distended sack (f. 69, v°.)

Another story which is told of Godric is equally pertinent to our subject. One day in autumn, the saint was gathering his apples. Suddenly there appeared on the other side of his hedge a great rough-looking fellow, whose outer garment, open from his neck to his thighs, resembled green bark, beneath which he seemed to be clad in a rough bullock's hide. "Give me some apples, hermit!" shouted the stranger, and he shouted more than once, for at first Godric paid little attention to him. At last the hermit, turning towards him, said that if he would have any he must ask for them in the name of charity. "I ask for them in the name of charity, then," was the answer, in a gruff and rather embarrassed tone. "Take them," said Godric, "in the name of charity, and give God thanks." But the stranger threw them down, and, turning about,

after saluting Godric by certain gestures which were none of the most becoming, marched slowly away, leaving however a testimony of his fiendlike nature in the odour which followed him, at which the poor saint was so horrified that "every hair of his body stood stiff like the bristles of a boar." In our note below, we give this curious story as it stands in the original.* It may, we think, be true, as it is told by one who conversed with the hermit, but it must be true just as long afterwards another person took the keeper of a forest for Robin Goodfellow: such boors as Godric's devil were not confined to the twelfth century. Godric judged of the nature of his visiter by the smell which he left behind him, but to us the colour of his coat tells what class of beings the saint was thinking of.

Contemporary with Godric there lived at Farnham, in Yorkshire, another pious rustic, whose name was Ketel, and whom we may term the elf-seer. The historian William of Newbury relates many wonderful anecdotes of him. While but a lad, Ketel was one day returning from the

* "Cum poma colligeret in autumpno quidam procerus et circa humeros plusquam homo distentus, lustrabat sepem, habens exterius operimentum quasi de cortice viridi, ab humeris usque ad renes dissutum, interius autem velud corium bovis hirsutum. Qui vociferans, 'Heremita,' dicebat, 'da mihi de pomis.' Ille prius tacuit, sed cum importunius instaret, conversus ad eum, 'Frustra,' inquid, 'laboras, nisi pro caritate rogaveris.' Tunc imperfecta verbi prolatione, 'Pro caritate,' dixit, 'postulo.' Ad hæc sanctus, poma proferens, ait, 'Accipe, et Deo gratias age.' Ille oblata respuit, et cœpit recedere lento gressu cum fœtore, posteriora sua ostendens, et verenda nimis longa et horrida pro se trahens. Ex hoc turpi aspectu ita vir sanctus inhorruit, ut omnes sui corporis pilos tanquam setas porcorum exsurgere et rigere sentiret. Quanto autem ille temptator longius discedebat, tanto magis et fœtor et turpitudo crescebat." MS. Harl. fol. 59, v°.

field, riding on the waggon-horse, when suddenly, in a place perfectly level and smooth, the horse stumbled as though he had met with an obstacle, and his rider was thrown to the ground. As he raised himself up, Ketel beheld two very small black elves, who were laughing most lustily at the trick they had played upon him. From that hour was given to him the power of seeing the elves, wherever they might be and whatever they might be doing, and he often saved people from their malice. He assured those who were fortunate enough to gain his confidence, for he did not tell these things to everybody, that there were some hobgoblins (*dæmones*) who were large and strong, and who were capable of doing much hurt to those who might fall into their power; but that others were very small and contemptible, incapable of doing much harm, and very stupid and foolish, but which delighted in tormenting and teasing mankind. He said that he often saw them sitting by the road-side on the look-out for travellers upon whom to play their tricks, and laughing in high glee when they could cause either them or their horses to stumble, particularly when the rider, irritated against his steed, spurred and beat him well after the accident. Ketel, as might be supposed, drew upon himself by his officiousness, and by his power of seeing them, the hatred of the whole fraternity. A story equally curious, as showing how the popular legends were adopted by the monks of other countries as well as of our own, is that of the elf who in the earlier half of the twelfth century haunted the cellar of a monastery in the bishopric of Treves, told by our English chronicler John of Bromton. One morning, when the butler entered the cellar, he was not a little mortified at finding that during the night a whole cask of wine had been emptied, and that at least

the greater part of its contents had been spilt on the floor. Supposing this accident to have arisen out of the carelessness of his man, the butler was angry, chid him severely, and, locking the door of the cellar, took the key into his own charge. But all his precautions were vain, for the next morning another cask of wine was in the same condition. The butler, now utterly astonished, repaired in all speed to the father abbot, and, after due consultation, they went together to the cellar, where, having sprinkled all the barrels with holy water, the latter closed firmly the door, sealed it with the seal of the abbey, and took the key into his own keeping. Next morning he repaired again to the cellar, and found the door exactly as he had left it. The door was speedily opened, and the first object which met his view was a small black elf (puerulum nigrum mirandæ parvitatis) sticking fast by his hands to one of the vessels on which the holy water had been thrown. The abbot took the elf, clothed him in the habit of a monk, and kept him long in the school of the monastery, where he never grew any bigger. But one day an abbot from a neighbouring monastery came to examine the scholars, and, on hearing the story, counselled his brother abbot to keep no longer the devil in his house. The moment his monkish robe was taken from him, the elf vanished. Similar stories run through the mythology of all the western people;—we will only point out the story of the Haunted Cellar in Crofton Croker's Irish Fairy Legends, with the premisal that we consider the greater part of those legends as being of Saxon rather than of Irish origin.

We could easily multiply our examples of fairy stories inserted among the monkish legends, particularly those of a less ludicrous nature. Godric and Ketel having been

both rustics, their lives abound more with legends founded upon those of the peasantry than the life of any other saint, and they thus show us more distinctly the connexion between the superstitions of the two classes. We have at the same time a few independent allusions (or nearly independent, inasmuch as though related by monks they are given as popular legends) to these stories in their original form. We will give two examples of such allusions, which are quoted by the Grimms in the introduction to the Irische Elfenmärchen. The first is of the ninth century, and is told by the monk of San Gallen, whose work is printed in the fifth volume of Dom Bouquet. It is a story of the laborious playful goblin (dæmon qui dicitur larva, cui curæ est ludicris hominum illusionibus vacare), and the latter part of it may be compared with the foregoing story of the elf who haunted the abbot's cellar. Our goblin frequented the forge of a smith, where he played all night with the anvil and hammers, to the no small annoyance of their proprietor, who resolved to drive him away by the signing of the cross. But the elf had formed an attachment to the place, and was not willing to go: "Gossip," said he to the smith, "let me play in thy forge, and if thou wilt place here thy pitcher thou shalt find it every day full of wine." The terms were readily accepted, and every night the elf repaired to the cellar of the bishop, filled his pitcher with wine, and, clumsily enough, left the cask open so that all the rest of the wine ran out upon the floor. The bishop soon perceived what was going on in his cellar, and supposing that the mischief must be the work of some spiritual adversary, he sprinkled the cellar with holy water, and fortified it with the sign of the cross. The night following the elf entered as usual with his pitcher,

but he could neither touch the wine nor escape from the place, and in the morning they took him and bound him to a stake, where he was condemned to undergo the punishment due to a thief. Amidst his stripes he never ceased to cry, "Alas! alas! I have lost my gossip's pitcher!" Our other extract is from a very old penitential which is preserved in a manuscript at Vienna; it alludes evidently to the same class of stories, and to a practice which had arisen out of them, and points out the necessary penitence for those who "had thrown little bows and small shoes into their cellars and barns, in order that the hobgoblins might come thither to play with them, and might in return bring them other people's goods."

From some cause or other, with which we are not well acquainted, our chronicles of the twelfth century are full of fairy legends. The Cambrian Giraldus, Gervase of Tilbury, William of Newbury, and several others, give us so much curious information on the popular mythology of their time, that we can, without much difficulty, sketch the outlines of the vulgar creed. We are there made acquainted with the mischievous elf in all his different shapes, and Gervase even is doubtful whether, on account of the harmlessness of his jokes, he ought to call him a *demon* or not—"Ecce enim Anglia dæmones quosdam habet, dæmones, inquam, nescio dixerim an secretas et ignotæ generationis effigies."

The familiar goblin of Gervase of Tilbury, like the fir-darrig of the Irish, and Milton's 'lubber fiend,' loved to seat himself before the remains of the fire after the family had retired to their slumbers; he then appeared as a very little man, with an aged countenance, his face all covered with wrinkles. He was very harmless, and his great characteristic was simplicity, in which he resembled the rustics,

whose houses he commonly frequented. One of his names, indeed, (*folletus*, Gerv. T., the modern French *follet*, which is a diminutive of the old French *fols*, fou,) signifies the little madcap, and may refer both to his simplicity and to his pranks. The follets of Gervase haunted generally the houses of country-people, whence neither holy water nor exorcism could expel them. They were invisible, and made known their arrival by throwing about stones, and wood, and even the pots and kettles. They also talked with great freedom. Giraldus tells us many stories of the domestic and playful elves of his native county of Pembroke, where they were very common, and plagued people by throwing dirt at them, and by cutting and tearing their garments. They took great delight also in telling people's secrets, and they paid no heed to the priests or their conjurations. Sometimes they entered into people, who thus became possessed, and they there continued their tricks and their conversation. An elf of this kind, in human form, entered the house of one Elidore Stakepole,* in that county, where he hired himself as a servant, and proved himself extremely faithful and diligent. As in every instance where an elf, whether puck, or brownie, or troll, has formed an attachment to a place, he has brought good luck along with him, so the family of Elidore Stakepole prospered exceedingly—everything went well with them. But Elidore, like many another in his situation, ruined himself by his curiosity. The elf was accustomed, during the night, to resort to the river, which shows his connexion with the whole family of the Teutonic alfen. One night he was watched, and the next day he quitted for ever the house of Elidore Stakepole, after telling the family

* See before, vol. i, p. 269.

who he was, and how he had been begotten by an incubus on a woman of the parish.

Before leaving the familiar elf of the twelfth century, we will present to our readers an inedited legend from a work of the beginning of the next century, the manuscript chronicle of Ralph of Coggeshale, which is particularly curious, from its singular resemblance to the more modern story of the German Hinzelmann. During the reign of the first Richard, there appeared frequently, and for a long space of time, in the house of Sir Osbern de Bradwell, at Dagworth in Suffolk, "a certain fantastical spirit," who conversed with the family of the aforesaid knight, always imitating the voice of an infant. He called himself Malkin; and he said that his mother and brother dwelt in a neighbouring house, and that they often chided him because he had left them and had presumed to hold converse with mankind. The things which he did and said were both wonderful and very laughable, and he often told people's secrets. At first the family of the knight were extremely terrified, but by degrees they became used to him, and conversed familiarly with him. With the family he spoke English; and that, too, in the dialect of the place; but he was by no means deficient in learning; for, when the chaplain made his appearance, he talked in Latin with perfect ease, and discoursed with him upon the Scriptures. He made himself heard and felt too, readily enough, but he was never seen but once. It seems that he was most attached to one of the female part of the family, a fair maiden, who had long prayed him to show himself to her; at last, after she had promised faithfully not to touch him, he granted her request, and there appeared to her a small infant, clad in a white frock. He also said that he was born at Lavenham; that his mother

left him for a short time in a field where she was gleaning; that he had been thence suddenly carried away, and had been in his present condition seven years; and that after another seven years he should be restored to his former state. He said that he and his companions had each a cap, by means of which they were rendered invisible. This is the German tarn-kappe. He often asked for food and drink, which, when placed on a certain chest, immediately disappeared. The writer, from whom this story is quoted, asserts that he had it from the chaplain who figures in it.*

* "*De quodam fantastico spiritu.*—Tempore regis Ricardi, apud Daghewurthe in Suthfolke, in domum domini Osberni de Bradewelle, quidam fantasticus spiritus multociens et multo tempore apparuit, loquens cum familia prædicti militis, vocem infantis unius anni in sono imitatus, ac se Malekin vocitabat. Matrem vero suam cum fratre in domo vicina manere asserebat, et se frequenter ab eisdem objurgari dicebat, eo quod ab eis discedens cum hominibus loqui præsumeret. Mira et risui digna et agebat et loquebatur, et aliquoties aliorum occultos actus retegens. Ex colloquiis ejus primo uxor militis et tota familia valde territa est, sed postmodum ejus verbis et ridiculosis actibus assuefacti, confidenter ac familiariter cum eo loquebantur, plurima ab eo inquirentes. Loquebatur autem Anglice secundum idioma regionis illius, interdum etiam Latine, et de Scripturis sermocinabatur cum capellano ejusdem militis, sicut ipse nobis veraciter protestatus est. Audiri et sentiri potuit, sed minime videri, nisi semel a quadam puella de thalamo visa est in specie parvissimi infantis, qui inducbatur quadam alba tunica, nimium prius a puella fogata et adjurata ut se visibilem ei exhiberet, quo nullo modo ejus petitioni consentire voluit, donec puella per Deum juraret, quod eam nec tangeret nec teneret. Confessa est quoque quod nata erat apud Lanaham, et dum mater ejus secum eam deferret in campum ubi cum aliis messuit, et solam eam relinqueret in parte agri, a quadam ala rapta est et transposita, et jam .vij. annis cum eadem manserat, et dicebat quod prout alios .vij. annos reverteretur ad pristinam hominum cohabitationem. Capello quo-

Another story has been pointed out to us in a manuscript of the thirteenth century, preserved in the Bodleian library at Oxford, which at once introduces Robin Goodfellow both in name and action. It occurs amongst a collection of short stories, moralized after the manner of the time, and, as a specimen of the whole, we give both the tale and its moral. "Once Robinet was in a certain house in which certain soldiers were resting for the night, and, after having made a great clamour during the better part of the night, to their no small annoyance, he was suddenly quiet. Then said the soldiers to each other, 'Let us now sleep, for Robinet himself is asleep.' To which Robinet made reply, 'I am not asleep, but am resting me, in order to shout the louder after.' And the soldiers said, 'It seems, then, that we shall have no sleep to night.' So sinners sometimes abstain for a while from their wicked ways, in order that they may sin the more vigorously afterwards .... The soldiers are the angels about Christ's body, Robin is the devil or the sinner," &c.*

This last story, if it be of the thirteenth century, is

dam se et alios uti dicebat, qui se invisibiles reddebat. Cibaria et potus ab assistentibus multociens exigebat, quæ super quandam arcam reposita, amplius non inveniebantur."—*MS. Cotton. Vespas. D. X.* fol. 89, v°. The confusion of genders makes the latter part rather obscure.

* "Nota de *Robineto* qui fuit in quadam domo in qua milites quidam quadam nocte hospitati sunt, et cum media nocte multum clamasset, et milites valde inquietasset et a sompno impedisset, tandem clamore fassus quievit. Et dixerunt milites ad invicem, 'Dormiamus modo, quia modo dormit *Robinetus*.' Quibus *Robinetus* respondit, 'Non dormio, sed quiesco, ut melius postea clamem.' Et dixerunt milites, 'Ergo non dormiemus hac nocte'.... Milites sunt angeli.... *Robinus* diabolus vel peccator."—*MS. Digby*, Auct. C. 10.

an almost solitary allusion to the pranks of the familiar elf in England for a long period after the century preceding. During the latter part of the twelfth century, and the whole of the thirteenth, a great struggle and a vast revolution of feelings and notions were going forward in our island. With the change came in gradually a new and more refined literature; the saints' legends were thrown aside to make way for the romances; and the gross and mischievous elves lost their reputation before that of the more airy and genteel race who were denominated by the newly-introduced name of fairies. It is worthy indeed of remark, that the manuscripts of the lives and miracles of the English saints are by far the best and the most numerous during the twelfth and the earlier half of the thirteenth centuries. We must therefore pass over the centuries which follow, and come immediately to the period of the formation of those histories, of which we shall at present consider the adventures of Friar Rush to be the representative, the more so as his was a story popular throughout the whole of Teutonic Europe.

Ferdinand Wolf, of Vienna, a scholar well known for his interesting labours in the medieval literature of France and Germany, published a few years ago a German poetical history of Friar Rush, of the earlier part of the sixteenth century, which is the earliest version of the story of which we have any knowledge; and, as might perhaps be expected, is the simplest in its details. Its hero is introduced to us as a *bona fide* devil; but there are too many traits in his actions and character to allow us to be mistaken in identifying him with the elves of whom we have been speaking. There was once, as the legend tells us, a fair abbey—

"In distant land, beside a wood,
Well known to fame, an abbey stood;
A numerous brotherhood within;
But ill did abbey discipline
Sort with the joyous warmth of youth,
And oftener dwelt their thoughts, in sooth,
On gentle damsel's charms and beauty,
Than on their gospels or their duty."

We give the passage thus loosely paraphrased as a specimen of the style of the old German poem—

"Ain kloster vor eim walde lag,
Dar in man vil der wunder pflag.
Do waren münch ein michel theil,
Sie waren iung vnd dar zuo geil,
Vnd schwartze kutten truogen sie dar;
Sie dienten gott gar wenig zwar.
Ein yetlicher wolt haben ein eigen weib;
Des ward vnder ynen mancher streyt."

The German legend places the abbey in Denmark—

"In Denmarck bey Helsinghore genant,
Do ym das kloster was wol bekannt:"

The Danish poem, on the contrary, fixes it in Germany, in 'Saxon-land;' and the English, leaving the question entirely unresolved, tells us simply that it was 'beyond the sea.' Be this as it may, our worthy friend, Friar Rush, saw that there was a noble occasion of doing mischief, and he repaired to the abbey in the garb of a youth who sought employment. He was well received by the abbot, and appointed to serve in the kitchen. But he soon made it manifest that he was fitted for higher and more confidential service. Before night he performed the part of a skilful envoy, and procured for the father abbot

the company of the dame whom he had long desired. The fame of Rush was soon spread amongst the community, and every brother of the abbey was fitted with a bedfellow after his liking. Time passed on, and Rush made continual advances in favour, when a sudden quarrel arose between him and the 'master cook,' who seconded his orders by rude strokes of a staff which lay ready at hand. Rush was enraged, seized the cook, and threw him into a pot which was boiling on the fire, where he was scalded to death. The abbot and the friars, hearing that an accident had happened to their cook, unanimously chose Rush into his place, who in his new office gained daily an increase of their good graces by the excellent dishes which he prepared for them, particularly on fast-days. For seven years did Rush serve in the abbey kitchen, and in the eighth, he was called before the abbot, and was made a friar in reward for his services.

One day the friars found brother Rush sitting in the gateway cutting wooden staves, and they asked him what he was doing, and he told them that he was making them weapons, with which, in case of danger, they might defend their abbey. And about the same time there arose great dissension between the abbot and the prior, and between the monks, and all for the sake of a woman; and each party went secretly to Friar Rush and provided themselves with stout staves. The same night at matins, there was a great fray; the abbot struck the prior, and the prior struck the abbot again, and every monk drew forth his staff, and there were given plenty of hard blows. Rush, to increase the confusion, blew out the lights, so that none knew his friend from his foe; and then, seizing the great bench, he threw it amidst the combatants,

whereby not a few had broken bones, so that they all lay together in the chapel in a most dismal state. When the fray was ended, Rush came with a light, pretended to feel great concern for what had happened, aided them to rise, and counselled them to seek repose in their beds.

The devils of the legends, like the elves whose place they had usurped, were very simple, and were often cheated or disconcerted by a trifle. So it happened in the end with Friar Rush. One day, when he was returning late to his cloister, reflecting that there was nothing in the kitchen for dinner, he tore in two pieces a cow which was grazing in the fields where he passed, and carried the one half home with him to the abbey. Next day the owner was dismayed at finding but the half of his cow. As night drew on suddenly while he was still in the fields, he took shelter in a hollow tree. Now it so happened that this identical night had been appointed by Lucifer, the prince of the devils, to meet his emissaries on earth, and to hear from them an account of their proceedings: and they came flocking like so many birds to the very tree in which the countryman had concealed himself. Without perceiving that they were overlooked and overheard, they began each to give an account of himself, until it came at last to the turn of Rush, who told how he had been admitted as cook in the abbey, how he had set the monks by the ears, and had given them staves wherewith to break each other's heads—all of which they had done to his entire satisfaction—and how he hoped in the end to make them kill one another, and so bring them all to hell. Next morning the countryman left his hiding-place, repaired straight to the abbot, and gave him a faithful account of all that he had seen and heard. The abbot called

Rush before him, conjured him into the form of a horse, drove him from the place, and forbade him ever to return thither.

Rush, driven away in spite of himself by the ban of the abbot, hied over the sea to England, where he entered the body of the king's daughter, and caused her many a day of torment. The king, her father, sent to Paris for the most skilful "masters," who at last forced Rush to tell his name, and to confess that none had power to dispossess him except the abbot of "Kloster Esron," for such was the name of the abbey where he had dwelt. The abbot came, called Rush out of the maiden, forced him into his former shape of a horse, which he condemned him henceforth to retain, and made him carry over the sea to Denmark himself and the reward which the king of England had given him.

Such is the outline of the German legend of Friar Rush. The fundamental legend was perhaps a Latin monkish story, now unknown, which took its birth in Denmark, and which was soon spread orally among the people, thus taking a more popular form—at a later period the original story, the popular form which it had thus taken, and the well-known legend of St. Zeno, had all been combined together in forming a larger poem, still confined to Denmark, and it is probable that, either orally or in writing, it was thence carried into Germany. The proposition, however, as thus put, gives rise to one or two questions, that may at least be stated, if not discussed. First, are we authorized to infer, from the circumstances of the locality of Friar Rush's abbey being placed by the German poem in Denmark, and of the existence of the legend itself in that country, that that legend was originally Danish?

After a fair consideration of the question, it appears to us that the probability at least is for this opinion, which is that held by the learned editor of the German poem. But we are inclined also to think that, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and perhaps later, it was very common, when people would tell a legend supposed to have happened in another land, to place its locality in Denmark; we have thus in Giraldus the story of a household spirit who served a bishop in Denmark (perhaps the oldest form of the story of Hudekin); we have several stories among our saints' legends the scene of which is Denmark. Had the name of Denmark been thus accidentally introduced, the story might have been adventitious to that country, and yet might at a later period have localized itself there.

Laying aside, however, the question of locality, there arises another of much greater importance to the history of the legend—did the character of Friar Rush exist among the people independently of the legend which is now inseparable from his name? Or, in other words, was Friar Rush a general or a particular name in the popular mythology? The preface of the work just quoted furnishes us with a passage which we think sets aside all doubt on this question, because it alludes to a tale that with little variation occurs constantly in the popular mythology;—we mean the "mira historia" which Pontoppidan relates on the faith of Resenius,—how a nobleman in Denmark one day threatened jokingly his children that Friar Rush should come and take them, and, how the friar was instantly present, and by force invisible held the nobleman's carriage fast to the spot. We are inclined to think that at an early period there came into the popular mythology of our western lands a personage in the character of a monk or friar.

In Germany the monk was sometimes Rübezahl, and the story which we quote for our authority affords us another instance how the writers on witchcraft and spirits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, like the monks who preceded them, confounded elves with devils, which naturally arose from their belief in the existence of the former, and their own peculiar sentiments with regard to the latter.* In the popular superstitions of England there certainly existed such a friar, who was not less mischievous than Brother Rush. Everybody knows the "*friar's* lantern" in Milton which led people astray from their path. Harsnet alludes to the practice of laying a bowl of cream to propitiate "Robin Goodfellow, the Friar, and Sisse (i. e. Cicely), the dairy-maid," in which three personages we suspect that we see three others, the *Robin* Hood, *Friar* Tuck, and *maid* Marian of the old popular morrice-dance. Denmark, therefore, and Germany also, may have had their Friar Rush, and we suspect that such a personage under the same name was well known to our English peasantry, for, the first time we meet with him in England, which is early in the latter half of the sixteenth century, he is by no means introduced as a foreigner. We are inclined therefore to think that the sojourn of Rush in the abbey was

* "Ferunt in montanis Bohemiæ non raro apparere monachum, quem nominant Rubezal, et persæpe in thermis conspicuum, iter per montanas sylvas facturis sese adjungere, eosque bono animo esse jubere, se enim ignaros itineris recto tramite per sylvam deducturum, quos simul ac in nemore in avia deduxerit, ut quo se vertant prorsus nesciant, eum protinus in arborem subsilire, tantumque cachinnum tollere, ut vastum inde nemus resonet. Monachus iste vel Rubezal est Satanus ipse, qui assumpta monachi specie istas nugas agit."—*Magica de Spectris*, Lugd. Bat. 1656, p. 79. (Collected by Grosius.)

originally *a* legend of Friar Rush, and not *the* legend of Friar Rush, but that this particular legend became so popular that it either absorbed or eclipsed all the others, so as by degrees to leave its hero identified only with itself. The groundwork was a simple story of the visit of the mischievous elf to a monastery, a legend common enough if we may judge by the German stories in Wierus.

A legend, like a ball of snow, is enlarged by rolling, and so soon as Friar Rush became the acknowledged hero of a history, that history increased rapidly in its passage from one hand to another. In the old version, which was published in England, we have many circumstances that are not found in the German, and these additions show us very distinctly in what light those from whom they came must have looked upon the personage of the friar. The English story of Friar Rush is in prose. During his stay in the abbey, after the battle of the staves, Rush continues here his tricks upon the abbot and monks, at one time covering the abbot's waggon with tar when he was told to grease it, at another drinking wine at the abbot's expense, and saying that he had given it to the horses, and lastly breaking down the stairs of the dormitory, so that when the monks at night would descend to their matins, they all fall down and break their bones. Such stories also have been told of Robin Goodfellow. After having been driven from the monastery, Friar Rush enters into service, and becomes on the whole a very honest and harmless fellow, still retaining one characteristic of the old industrious elf, that of doing much work in a short space of time. He hires himself to a countryman, whose wife is a terrible scold, and will not permit her husband to keep a servant, in order that he may be obliged to go to the fields, and thus give her an oppor-

tunity of receiving the visits of her paramour, the priest. Rush becomes very jealous of the interests of his master. At supper, the first day,—

"As they sate at meate, Rush demanded of his master what he should doe the next day? His master answered, thou must rise early and goe to the field, and make an end of that which I was about this day, (which was a great dayes worke); so when they had supt they went to bed. Early in the morning Rush arose and went to the field, and wrought so lustily, that he had done his work betimes; for when his master came to bring him his breakfast, all his worke was finished, whereat his master had great marvaile; then they sate downe to breakfast, which being ended they went home, and did such things as were there to bee done; when his dame sawe that he had so soone ended his business, she thought that he was a profitable servant, and said little, but left him alone. In the evening Rush demanded of his master what hee should doe the next morrow? His master appointed him twice so much as hee did the day before, which Rush refused not, but got up earely in the morning, and went to the field, and about his worke; so soone as his master was ready, he tooke his man's breakfast and came to the field, thinking to helpe Rush; (but he was no sooner come from his house but the priest came to see his wife, and presently she made ready some good meate for them to be merry withall, and whyle it was a dressing, they sate sporting together,—who had beene there should have seene many loving touches.) And when the goodman came to the field, he found that Rush had done all that which he appointed, whereof he had great marvaile; then they sate downe to breakfast, and as they sate together, Rush beheld his master's shoone, and per-

ceived that for fault of greasing they were very hard: then said Rush to his master, why are not your shoes better greased, I marvaile that you can goe in them, they be so hard? Have you no more at home? Yes, said his master, I have another payre lying under a great chest at home in my chamber. Then said Rush, I will goe home and grease them that you may put them on to-morrow; and so he walked homeward merrily and sung by the way. And when he approached neare the house he sang out very loude; with that his dame looked out at the window, and perceived that it was her servant: shee said unto the priest, alas, what shall we doe? Our servant his come home, and my husband will not be long after. And with that she thrust the meate into the oven, and all that was upon the table. Where shall I hyde me, said the priest? Goe into the chamber, and creepe under the great chest, among the olde shoone, and I shall cover you, and so he did. And when Rush was come into the house, his dame asked him why he came home so soone. Rush answered and said, I have done all my busines, and master commanded me to come home and grease his shoone. Then he went into the chamber and looked under the chest, and there hee found the priest, and tooke him by the heeles and drew him out, and said, thou whoreson priest, what doost thou here? With that the priest held up his hands and cryed him mercy, and desired him to save his honesty, and hee would never more come there; and so Rush let him goe for that once."

We give the foregoing extract as a specimen of the style of the English Friar Rush. The priest broke his word, returned, and was again surprized by Rush, who found him hidden under the straw in the stable. A second time he was permitted to escape, though not till after he had received

"three or foure good dry stripes," and had promised solemnly never to return. Yet the priest ventured to break his word again, and in a visit to the farmer's wife their merriment was a third time interrupted by the well-known song of Rush, who was returning from his labours.

"Then wringing her hands she said unto the priest, goe hyde you, or else you be but dead. 'Where shall I hyde me, said the priest? Goe up into the chamber and leape into the basket that hangeth out of the window, and I shall call you when he is gone againe. Then anon in came Rush, and she asked him why he came home so soone. Then said Rush, I have done all my busines in the field, and my master hath sent me home to wash your cheese-basket, for it is full of haires, and so he went into the chamber, and with his knife he cut the rope that the basket hung by, and downe fell priest and all into a great poole of water that was under the window: then went he into the stable for a horse and rode into the poole and tooke the rope that hung at the basket, and tying it to the horses tayle, rode through the poole three or four tymes. Then he rode through the towne to cause the people to wonder at him, and so came home againe. And all this while he made as though he had knowne nothing, but looking behinde him, espyed the priest. Then he alighted downe, and said unto him, thou shalt never more escape me, thy life his lost. With that the priest held up his hands and said, heere is a hundred peeces of gold, take them and let me goe. So Rush tooke the golde and let the priest goe. And when his master came home, he gave him the halfe of his money, and bade him farewell, for he would goe see the world."

After leaving the farmer, Rush went into the service of a gentleman whose daughter was possessed, and persuaded

him to send for the abbot of the monastery where he had resided, who cured the maiden, conjured Rush into his own likeness of a horse, made him carry him home as well as a quantity of lead which the gentleman had given him, and then confined him to "an olde castle that stood farre within the forrest," and the story ends with the pious exclamation, "from which devill and all other devills defend us, good Lord! Amen."

We have spoken of the collections of tales, which, at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries, were formed in England under the title of the *Adventures and Pranks of Robin Goodfellow*, as closely resembling in their shape and character the legend of Friar Rush, and as thus affording a new proof of the identity of those two personages of the popular mythology. Few of these collections have been preserved, but we have good reason for believing that at one time they were extremely popular. There is in the library of the lord Francis Egerton, a unique prose tract, in black letter, of the date 1628, entitled *Robin-Goodfellow his mad Pranks and merry Jests*, which has been reprinted by Mr Collier. Before leaving the subject, we will give an analysis of a small tract in ballad verse on the adventures of this hero, which is supposed to have been printed about the year 1600. Robin Goodfellow, like the familiar elves of the twelfth century, is represented as the offspring of an incubus; whilst he was yet a child his tricks were the plague of the neighbours, whose complaints so grieved his mother, that at last he ran away to escape punishment, and after wandering some time hired himself to a tailor, in whose service he played a joke not unlike that of Rush on the abbot's waggon.

"He had a gowne which must be made
Even with all haste and speed;
The maid must have't against next day,
To be her wedding weed.

The taylor he did labour hard
Till twelve a clock at night;
Betweene him and his servant then
They finished aright

The gowne, but putting on the sleeves:
Quoth he unto his man,
I'll go to bed: whip on the sleeves
As fast as e'er you can.

So Robin straightway takes the gowne,
And hangs it on a pin,
Then takes the sleeves and whips the gowne;
Till day he nere did lin.

His master rising in the morne,
And seeing what he did,
Began to chide; quoth Robin then,
I doe as I was bid.

His master then the gowne did take
And to his worke did fall:
By that time he had done the same,
The maid for it did call.

Quoth he to Robin, goe thy wayes
And fetch the remnants hither
That yesterday we left; said he,
We'll breake our fasts together.

Then Robin hies him up the staires
And brings the remnants downe,
Which he did know his master sav'd
Out of the woman's gowne.

The taylor he was vext at this,
He meant remnants of meat,
That this good woman, ere she went,
Might there her breakfaste eate."

Robin afterwards runs away, and, falling asleep in a forest, is there visited by his father, who according to the fashion of the time is called Oberon, and who makes known to him his origin and his power of transforming himself to what shape he will, a power which he delays not to put in practice, and

"Turnes himselfe into what shape
He thinks upon, or will;
Sometimes a neighing horse was he,
Sometimes a gruntling hog,
Sometimes a bird, sometimes a crow,
Sometimes a snarling dog."

Straight he hies to a wedding, in the shape of a fiddler, and there he puts out the candles, frightens the guests, drinks the posset, and runs away "laughing, hoe! hoe! hoe!" But the last story of our tract is the most curious, with regard to the history of our legends. We have seen that in the English legend Friar Rush took delight in disconcerting and punishing the adulterous priest. In the same manner the German Eudekin hinders a fair dame from being faithless to her husband. Precisely a similar story is told here of Robin Goodfellow. An old man seeks to seduce his niece, who, it seems, was his ward, and he hinders her from marrying a young man whom she loves. In the midst of her distress, Robin makes his appearance.

"He sends them to be married straight,
And he, in her disguise,
Hies home with all the speed he may
To blind her unkle's eyes;

And there he plyes his worke amaine,
Doing *more in one houre*,
Such was his skill and workmanship,
Than she can doe in foure.

The old man wonder'd for to see
The worke goe on so fast,
And therewithall more worke doth he
Unto good Robin cast.

Then Robin said to his old man,
Good unkle, if you please
To grant to me but one ten pound,
I'll yield your love-suit ease.

Ten pounds, quoth he, I will give thee,
Sweet niece, with all my heart,
So thou wilt grant to me thy love,
To ease my troubled heart.

Then let me a writing have, quoth he,
From your owne hand with speed,
That I may marry my sweetheart
When I have done this deed."

Robin obtains the money and the writing, and immediately seizes the old man, carries him to the chamber where are the niece and her husband, and himself quickly eludes the old fellow's vengeance, and goes to play his pranks elsewhere.

"Thus Robin lived a merry life
As any could enjoy,
'Mong country farms he did resort,
And oft would folks annoy;

But if the maids doe call to him,
He still away will goe
In knavish sort, and to himselfe
He'd laugh out hoe! hoe! hoe!

He oft would beg and crave an almes,
But take nought that they'd give;
In several shapes he'd gull the world,
Thus madly did he live.

Sometimes a cripple he would seeme,
Sometimes a souldier brave:
Sometimes a fox, sometimes a hare;
Brave pas'imes would he have.

Sometimes an owle he'd seem to be,
Sometimes a skipping frog;
Sometime a kirne, in Irish shape,
To leape ore mire or bog:

Sometimes he'd counterfeit a voyce,
And travellers call astray:
Sometimes a walking fire he'd be,
And lead them from their way.

Some call him Robin Goodfellow,
Hob-goblin, or Mad Crisp;
And some againe doe tearme him oft
By name of Will the Wispe:

But call him by what name you list,
I have studied on my pillow,
I think the best name he deserves
Is Robin the Good Fellow."

It would be easy for us to trace the familiar and mischievous elf in England, in a hundred different shapes, up to the present day. But we have done enough for our purpose—we have shown the existence of this personage of the popular mythology from an extremely early period up to the time of the formation of the adventures of Friar Rush and Robin Goodfellow; we have also, we think, adduced sufficient reasons for supposing that the one, as well as the other, was a general and not a particular name; or, to use again a distinction which we have already employed, that the foundations of these tale-books were legends, but not *the* legends of the personages whose names they bear. There is no stronger distinguishing characteristic of the different families of people than that afforded by their popular superstitions, and, were it but on this account, they are well worthy of our attention. Our language, our manners, our institutions, our political position, through ten centuries, have been undergoing a continual and important change; yet during this long period our popular mythology, deeply imprinted in the minds of the peasantry, has remained the same, and, where it has not been driven away by schoolmasters and steam-engines, it still exists unaltered. It has not only existed during this period, but it has from time to time stepped forth from its obscurity and exerted a powerful influence on the world around. First, it was received or retained unwittingly by the Christian missionaries and converts, and created in their hands a race of beings, designated by the name of demons, which never existed in the pure Christian creed. Afterwards its influence was felt by philosophy, and it had no little share in the strange vagaries of alchymy and magic. Next, it appeared in a more terrible form than all; singularly

enough, as our forefathers became more enlightened, the popular superstitions seized more forcibly than ever upon their minds; and the destruction of many thousands of persons in the space of a few years for the imaginary crime of witchcraft will bear a permanent and substantial testimony to what superstition can do. The Puritans, who succeeded the Papists, were by no means less superstitious than their predecessors—their devils were but a repetition of those of the monks of earlier times. The popular notion of devils and their works, as it now exists, decidedly owes its origin to the old mixture of popular mythology with Christianity—to it we must attribute the ludicrous character which has so often in popular stories been given to the demons, their stupidity, and their simplicity. To such devils as these do we owe devil's bridges, and devil's arrows, and devil's holes, and devil's dykes, and the like, which are continually met with in the wilder and more mountainous parts of our island. To these devils, too, we owe haunted houses and haunted castles—they delight in throwing about the chairs and the crockery-ware. Such, also, are the devils who still sometimes make their appearance among the Welsh peasantry, and of whom they tell a multiplicity of tales.

Of these tales we will give the following as a specimen—it is one that we have ourselves heard told in the Welsh marches,—it is the story of Morgan Jones and the devil. Those who would have another may look into any Welsh guide for that of the Devil's Bridge in Carmarthenshire. Doubtless the Devil's Hole in the Peak had a similar legend connected with it, whose original may also have had some connection with the elf-story told by Gervase of Tilbury as having occurred at this spot. But let us

return to our story. Some twenty years ago, when in retired parts of the country the communication between one place and another was much slower and less frequent than it is now, there was a good deal of horse-stealing carried on in the English counties on the borders of Wales. Those counties were and are very full of pretty little towns and villages, in one or another of which there were fairs for the sale of live stock almost every day of the year, and it was easy to steal a horse from one parish, and carry it away and sell it at some one of these fairs, almost before the rightful owner knew that he had lost it. Well, it so happened that about this time lived a lazy careless rollicking sort of fellow, by name Morgan Jones, who contrived to make a living somehow or other, but how it was nobody well knew, though most people suspected it was not the most honest livelihood a person might gain. In fact, every body was sure that Morgan was deeply implicated in horse-stealing, and many a time had he been brought before the justice on suspicion, but do what they could nobody could find sufficient evidence to convict him. People wondered and talked about it for a long time, until at last they came to the only natural conclusion, namely, that Morgan Jones must have dealings with the evil one.

Now it once chanced that Morgan and some of his chosen cronies were making themselves jolly over sundry pots of ale and pipes of tobacco, at a round white deal table, in the clean parlour of a very neat little alehouse, as all village alehouses are in that part of the country. And they began to get very happy and comfortable together, and were telling one another their adventures, till at last one spoke plainly out, and told Morgan Jones that it was commonly reported he had to do with the devil.

"Why yes," answered Morgan, "there's some truth in that same, sure enough; I used to meet with him now and then, but we fell out, and I have not seen him these two months."

"Aye!" exclaimed each of the party, "how's that, Morgan?"

"Why, then, be quiet, and I'll tell ye it all." And thereupon Morgan emptied his pot, and had it filled again, and took a puff of his pipe, and began his story.

"Well then," says he, "you must know that I had not seen his honour for a long time, and it was about two months ago from this that I went one evening along the brook shooting wild-fowl, and as I was going whistling along, whom should I spy coming up but the devil himself? But you must know he was dressed mighty fine, like any grand gentleman, though I knew the old one well by the bit of his tail which hung out at the bottom of his trousers. Well, he came up, and says he, 'Morgan, how are ye?' and says I, touching my hat, 'pretty well, your honour, I thank ye.' And then says he, 'Morgan, what are ye looking a'ter, and what's that long thing ye're carrying with ye?' And says I, 'I'm only walking out by the brook this fine evening, and carrying my backy-pipe with me to smoke.' Well, you all know the old fellow is mighty fond of the backy; so says he, 'Morgan, let's have a smoke, and I'll thank ye.' And says I, 'You're mighty welcome.' So I gave him the gun, and he put the muzzle in his mouth to smoke, and thinks I, 'I have you now, old boy,' 'cause you see I wanted to quarrel with him; so I pulled the trigger, and off went the gun bang in his mouth. 'Puff!' says he, when he pulled it out of his mouth, and he stopped a minute to think about it, and

says he, 'D—d strong backy, Morgan!' Then he gave me the gun, and looked huffed, and walked off, and sure enough I've never seen him since. And that's the way I got shut of the old gentleman, my boys!"

Such is the ludicrous story of Morgan Jones, who had to do with a proper Welsh devil, without doubt.

ESSAY XI.

OBSERVATIONS ON DUNLOP'S HISTORY OF FICTION.

OME years have now passed since Dunlop's *History of Fiction* was first published, during which great advances have been made in the general knowledge of the subject on which it treats, and many new facts have been discovered. Yet it is a valuable book of reference for general readers, and contains a large mass of popular information on the romantic writers of ancient and modern times; though it is deficient in arrangement, and it certainly does not give a correct *historical* view of the origin and progress of fiction and romance.

Nothing can be more erroneous than the attempt to trace the origin of romantic literature to one particular source, be that source either Eastern, or Gothic, or Grecian, for each of these have formed the ground of different hypotheses, which have been supported with equal ingenuity and perseverance. Every country has possessed, in its own primeval literature, the first germ of romance, which has been developed more or less under different circumstances, influenced frequently by accidents, and has been in course of time modified in its form and character, by intercourse with a foreign literature in a different stage of development. The earliest class of romance was of a purely mythic character. Epithets given to the Deity by

his worshippers, in the infancy of nations, were afterwards mistaken for names of different personages; and the attributes expressed or implied by them were gradually transformed into deeds and actions of the individual, and were, in course of time, combined and confounded with the dim and gigantic traditions of real events which had survived through several generations, when memory was the only means of preserving them. These appear first in a poetical shape, because poetry was the only form of literary composition found in the primeval age. It is to this source that we owe the poetic legends of Troy and Thebes, and the whole range of Grecian (as well as Teutonic) mythology; and it is this nature of the origin of these legends that has left so much room for disputing whether the legends themselves are historical or purely mythic. The Eddas, indigenous to the north of Europe, are of this character. The Anglo-Saxons had as complete a family of gods as that which figures in the Grecian mythology: Woden, and his descendants Bed-wiga, and Hwala, and Hadra, and Heremon, and Heremod, and Beowa, and Tætwa, and Geata, and Godwulf, and Finn, and some thirteen more in succession,* were the demigods or heroes of the fabulous age of our primitive forefathers, and stand at the head of the Saxon mythic genealogy, to which the different branches of the Saxon blood-royal traced its descent; as the great families of Greece claimed descent from Theseus, Hercules, &c. Each of the names on the list was no doubt the subject of a series of romantic

* A curious dissertation on the Anglo-Saxon mythic genealogical list, by Mr. Kemble, will be found in the second volume of his edition of Beowulf.

adventures, many of which were well known among our forefathers as late as the twelfth century, though the only one which has descended to our own time, in anything approaching to a complete state, is the romance of Beowulf, the Beowa of the foregoing list. The Saxon Beowulf and the German Niebelungen Lied belong to the same class of literary productions as the Iliad and the Grecian cyclic poets.

We have few remains of the popular literature of the Anglo-Saxons, but, from different allusions in old writers, we are led to believe that it was rich in legendary stories. These were generally of a purely national character, and have consequently not unfrequently found their way into chronicles and histories. The legendary story of king Ina, from the *Brief history of the bishoprick of Somerset*, printed in one of the earlier publications of the Camden Society (Mr. Hunter's *Ecclesiastical Documents*), furnishes a very good example of Anglo-Saxon fictions:

"Formerly there were two kings reigning in England; one beyond the Humber, the other on this side of it. It happened that the king who reigned on this side the Humber, the number of his days being completed, went the way of all flesh. He left no heir behind him; whereupon, in the kingdom which he had governed, there arose a cessation of the administration of justice, and with it injustice; so that no room was left either for peace or equity. The unjust man condemned the just; the strong oppressed the weak; and the more powerful a man was, the more injurious was he to his neighbour. What more? Thus the want of an heir to the kingdom brought a miserable desolation: which beholding, the bishops and chief persons of the realm, desirous to obtain a king to

reign over them, consulted the Lord at London. The reply they received was, that they should seek out a man whose name was Ina, and make him king. When the chief men of the realm heard this, they immediately despatched many messengers in every direction who should seek out this person called Ina, and bring him to them: who, when they had sought him for a long time without success, a party of them, who had been inquiring in the western provinces, namely, in Cornwall and Devonshire, were returning, wearied in spirit, and directing their course towards London. These men, as they were travelling through the provinces, and had arrived at a certain town which is called Somerton, chanced to see there a certain husbandman with his plough, who, with a loud voice, was calling out for 'Ina,' that he might come with the oxen of his father, who was a partner of the husbandman. The messengers hearing this, inquired of the husbandman what he was calling; who replied, that he had called for Ina, the son of his partner, that he should come with his father's oxen. As soon as the messengers had seen Ina, and perceived that he was a handsome youth, tall and robust, they rejoiced with exceeding joy: 'This,' said they, 'is he of whom we are in search.' When they expressed their desire to take him with them, they were not suffered to do so by the father, nor yet by the neighbours, without giving a pledge and security that no harm should happen to him while he was in their hands. This being done, they brought him to London, to the chiefs and nobles of the realm, who, when they saw Ina, a young man, very handsome, and, as it seemed, very brave, they made him king, committing to him the kingdom and all belonging to it; and he was immediately consecrated by

the bishops. While these things were scarcely concluded, there came one who told the king, that the king on the other side the Humber had lately died, leaving an only daughter his heir, whose name was Adelburgh. When the king heard this, he sent a royal embassy to Adelburgh, with proposals of marriage; and that their two realms should be united in one monarchy. But Adelburgh, when she had received the proposal, despised it, and spurned the thought of marriage with the king, because it was said he was the son of a husbandman. King Ina, when he received this reply, thinking that he should himself have better success, determined to go in person; and, pretending that he was a messenger of the king, came to Adelburgh, and repeated the proposals which before had been made to her. But she, nevertheless, as before, rejected the proposal, on the ground that the king's father was a husbandman; which, when the king heard, thinking anxiously what he should do, that by some means or other he might succeed, he determined to remain with her some days, and even months, in the character of a servant waiting upon her. Now it happened that Adelburgh appointed a feast to be held for the chief persons of her realm. Ina, on the day of the festival, had the office assigned him by his mistress of placing the dishes on the table at the banquet. While he was performing this duty, being dressed in royal apparel, and appearing to far greater advantage than the other persons who were present, the lady, again and again admiring him, became exceedingly enamoured, and ordered a couch to be prepared for him at night in her own apartments. In a secret interview, at midnight, Ina again opened his embassy to Adelburgh. He could not, however, prevail to be heard, until, at

length, he declared to her who he was, and that he himself was the king: when she, wondering exceedingly at what had happened, was amazed, and, with hearty good will, acquiesced in his proposal. This being settled, the king departed; and being returned into his own country, sent a splendid embassy to conduct the lady to him. When she arrived at the town which was then called Cideston, but now Wells, they were there solemnly married."

Dunlop has erroneously placed at the *head* of the *History of Fiction* the works of the Byzantine novelists, the Greek *scriptores erotici*. There is no reason for supposing that the writings of Longus, and Achilles Tatius, and the other Greek authors of the same class, exercised any influence on the romantic literature of the West, until long after the age of the restoration of learning. Yet, by some unaccountable accident, one story, which appears to belong to this class, had found its way to the extreme West at a very early period; and it is also singular that the original Greek form of this story appears to be entirely lost. The story to which we allude is that of Apollonius of Tyre, which was extremely popular in the West of Europe during the middle ages, and formed the plot of the Pericles of Shakespeare. There exists an Anglo-Saxon version of this story, apparently of the tenth century, made directly from a Latin version, which is of very common recurrence in old manuscripts, and which must therefore be considered as more ancient than the period just mentioned. The earliest Greek version of this story, which appears to be made from a previous Greek text, is of a much more recent date. *

* Dunlop's account of this romance is an instance of the want of

The mythological or purely mythic, romances of the middle ages, were followed by another cycle of fictions, which may be termed semimythic, as being built on a general outline of historical events, confused and exaggerated by popular legends. Among these stands foremost the extensive Frankish cycle, founded upon the history of the Karlovingian race of princes. The gigantic events of the age of Charles Martel and Charlemagne, the terrible struggle between Christian and Saracen for the empire of the West, left a shadow behind them which widened and widened as the distance became greater, and gave birth to a host of romantic stories, that were gaining strength unobservedly, until they suddenly made their appearance, in the twelfth century, in the national literature of France. They first took their place in literature, as it appears, in the fabulous narrative of Charlemagne's expedition into Spain, published in Latin prose under the name of archbishop Turpin. The first known poem of this class was composed in the Anglo-Norman tongue, by an Englishman named Turold or Thorold, who appears to have lived as far back as the reign of king Stephen; it has been printed under the title of the *Chanson de Roland.* It is a noble specimen of the romance literature of this early age. After the publication of this work, the metrical romances relating to the Karlovingian heroes increased rapidly, and were known by the general title of *Chansons de Geste;* for they were believed to be purely historical. The ro-

accurate criticism displayed in his work. He first describes the Greek romance as one of those later Greek imitations composed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and then speaks of a Latin version as being "formed as early as the eleventh century," overlooking his own anachronism, and not apparently aware of the earlier Anglo-Saxon version.

mances of Garin of Lorraine, of Berte, of Wituchind, of Parise la Duchesse, of Ogier le Danois, and several others, have been recently printed by the French antiquaries; but the number and length of these romances is so extraordinary, that we can never hope to see more than a small collection in print.*

Some years after the appearance of the work of the pretended Turpin, another fabulous narrative in Latin prose was given to the public, which became likewise a fertile source of metrical romances. This was the *Historia Britonum* of Geoffrey of Monmouth, published in 1147, a work of which the history is involved in the greatest obscurity. It appears, however, to belong to the purely mythic, rather than to the semimythic, class of romances; it was avowedly taken from the traditions of Bretagne, and the most natural way of explaining its origin seems to be the supposition that the Bretons had a national mythic genealogy, like that of the Anglo-Saxons, a subject equally of popular legends, and that the personages of this genealogy had been taken by Geoffrey of Monmouth and his followers as historical characters. It would appear that these legends, under various forms, were floating about as popular traditions, and soon after Geoffrey's time, the romances of the St. Graal, of Lancelot, &c., appeared from the pens of Walter Mapes, Robert de Borron, and others; and in a short space of time the romances of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table became as numerous and popular as those of the cycle of Charlemagne. At present it is difficult for us to analyse the construction of these

* See a former Essay on the Chansons de Geste, in our first volume.

romances; but as far as we can judge, the earlier ones were implicitly copied from existing traditions, while the later compositions of the same class owed much to the mere invention of the writers, who copied and altered the incidents of older stories, and filled up the outline with new details of their own. These details had charms for the age in which they were written; but although valuable as pictures of medieval society, they are wearisome to us by their repetition.

During the thirteenth century, the two cycles of Charlemagne and king Arthur occupied by much the largest portion of the romantic literature of the day. There were, however, a few other classes of subjects which shared the honour of public popularity. In England, an interesting class had appeared as early as the twelfth century, the plots of which are generally laid in the Danish wars, from which circumstance they have been called the Anglo-Danish cycle, but which appear in reality to be only a reproduction of the older mythic romances of the Anglo-Saxons. To this class belong such romances as Havelok, Horn, Guy of Warwick, Bevis of Hampton, Wade, &c. On the other hand, the increased study of the classic writers of antiquity in the schools of France had brought into fashion the names of the Grecian and Roman heroes, and a strong tinge of medieval character was given to their adventures, in the shape of romances of Troy, of Thebes, of Alexander the Great, &c. The writers of this latter class of romances give us strange accounts of the authorities from whom they derived their materials. Benoît de St. More, the author of the earliest romance on the siege of Troy (taken from the supposititious history of Dares Phrygius), tells the following singular anecdote of Homer:

"Homers, qui fu clers mervelleus
Et sages et escienteus,
Escrist de la destrucion,
Del grand siege, et de l'acheson
Por coi Troye fut desertée,
Qui ainz puis ne fu abitée.
Mais ne dist pas ses livres voir;
Car bien savons, sans nul espoir,
Qu'il ne fu pas de c. anz nez
Que li granz oz fu asanblez.
Il i faut, sanz somes parfit,
C'onques n'i fu, ne rein n'en vit.
Quant il en ot son livre fet,
Et en Athenes l'ot retret,
Si ot estrange contençon:
Danpner le vostrent par reison,
Por ce qu'ot fet les dame-dex
Combatre o les homes charnex,
Et les deesses ansement
Feisoit combatre avoec la gent.
Et quant son livre receterent,
Pluisor por ce le refuserent;
Mès tant fu Homers de grant pris,
Et tant fist puis, si con je truis,
Que ses livres fu receuz
Et en auctorité tenuz."

"Homer, who was a marvellous clerk,
And wise and learned,
Wrote of the destruction,
And of the long siege, and of the reason
For which Troy was deserted,
Which was never afterwards inhabited.
But his book does not tell the truth;
For we know well, without any doubt,
That he was not born till a hundred years
After the great host was assembled.

It is quite certain, therefore,
That he was not present, and saw nothing of it.
When he had completed his book,
And had published it in Athens,
There arose a strange contention:
They wanted to condemn it, with reason,
Because he had made the gods
Fight with carnal men,
And the goddesses similarly
He made fight with the people.
And when they recited his book,
Many on that account refused it:
But Homer was in such great esteem,
And he exerted himself so much, as I find,
That his book was received
And held for good authority."

To these subjects of romance were added a few taken from the holy Scriptures, and some founded on the events of the crusades and other more recent occurrences.

In giving to his book the title of the *History of Fiction*, Dunlop appears to have intentionally avoided the more general term of romance, and to imply that his plan excluded such fabulous narratives as were not originally the inventions of the authors. By this, however, he has been led into the contradiction of taking up those romances of chivalry—including the cycles of Charlemagne and the Round Table—which were either founded upon the mythic and semimythic romances, or merely new editions or versions of them. And by making a further arbitrary division between the prose and metrical romances, and including the former only in his plan, he has made another historical mistake; and, taking up the romances of those cycles only in their more modern prosaic form, he has given, as a part

of the subdivision of fiction, a large class of writings which are totally distinct in their origin from the inventions of the Greek novelists and their imitators, and from the stories or *fabliaux* which came from the East, and which ought to have been considered in their purer and earlier form. It is true, that the earlier examples of the romances of the Round Table, those composed by Mapes and Borron, are in prose; but this is evidently an accidental circumstance. The medieval romances in their original shape were poems —they were called *chansons*, or songs, notwithstanding their length (extending sometimes to forty or fifty thousand lines), because they were literally sung by the minstrel, who, in this respect, represented the bard of a more primitive age. They were not composed as novels for the amusement of the closet.

In the twelfth century a new class of fictions makes its appearance in the literature of the West, evidently of Oriental origin,—the short tales, or *fabliaux*. These are of a gayer character than the romances, and are generally founded on the incidents and intrigues of domestic life. They become very numerous in the thirteenth century, when they seem to have been most popular in England and France; but, carried soon into Italy, they there obtained increased popularity through the *Decameron* of Boccaccio and his numerous imitators; and at a later period, singularly enough, after the original *fabliaux* seem to have been nearly forgotten, they received a new popularity in France and England by importation from Italy, and became the food of a very numerous class of story-tellers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Most of these, being only servile imitators and copyists, have long been consigned to the shelves of the mere bibliogra-

pher, who prizes them for their rarity; but they have still this simple value in the eyes of the historian of medieval fiction, that they preserve here and there a story of which the original *fabliau* is lost, and which forms a link in the general chain in tracing their transmission from the East. Dunlop's account of the Italian story-tellers, and their subsequent imitators, is the most useful part of his book.

The foregoing observations show how the groundwork of medieval fiction must be looked for in the primeval history of the nations of modern Europe, and how its field was gradually enlarged by the adoption of Grecian legends and the admission of Eastern stories. The only direct attempts at original invention is to be looked for in the allegorical romances, such as the *Romance of the Rose*, and those of a purely religious character. But the influence of the national legends is seen in almost all the medieval attempts at inventive romance, and was felt in some instances down to a very late period.

After the fifteenth century, the Greek novels, to which we have already alluded, were printed and read; and these appear to have given the first hint of the pastoral romances, which afterwards enjoyed such a long popularity. We refer to Dunlop's work for the history of fiction subsequent to this period. It is the only book of any utility on this subject in our language, and required a new edition. We could have wished to see its plan modified, or at least to see it accompanied with annotations embodying some of the important discoveries made in this branch of literary history since its first publication; or rather, we ought perhaps to say, that we wish for a new work, more accurate and more complete, on the same subject. But such a work does not appear at present to be forthcoming.

ESSAY XII.

ON THE HISTORY AND TRANSMISSION OF POPULAR STORIES.

HE history of popular fictions offers many subjects for deep reflection. It is in these rude records of an early state of society, but more durable than even the written documents of later history, that we may trace the primeval affinity of nations now widely separated by space and diversity of language and manners; and the traveller hears, with surprise and joy, the inhabitants of the distant wilds of India tell the same stories which have been the delight of his childhood in his own native land in the West. The national fictions of a people may be arranged in different classes, which have been transmitted and preserved in several different ways. Some of them—such as the mythic romances—are often as ancient as the tribe to which they belong, and have been in part carried away as a birthright when it branched off from the primitive stock; and these prove community of origin with other tribes in which the same mythic legends are found to exist. They are features common to the different children of one family. Another class of fictions has been mutually borrowed at some early period, when the different races who now preserve them have been in a position of

more intimate intercourse than at any subsequent time. A remarkable example of this latter class is furnished by the popular tales which were the favorite entertainment of our forefathers in the thirteenth and following centuries, and most of which were derived from the East. They are convincing monuments of a state of friendly intercourse between the Christians and Saracens, which is but faintly indicated in the more prejudiced writings of the monkish annalists.

Every one who is at all acquainted with the literary history of the middle ages, is aware that an important part of the business of the jongleur, or minstrel, was to tell stories, often of a ludicrous, and not unfrequently of a very coarse, description. Our literary historians have fallen into the error of supposing the jongleur to be merely the descendant of the older bard: he was, on the contrary, peculiar to the age which followed the crusades, and was without doubt an importation from the East. His attributes were far more varied than those of the Saxon or German minstrel. He was alternately a story-teller, a musician, a mountebank, and a conjuror; and we find in his suite even the dancing-girls who are still cherished in oriental countries. These could have been transmitted from one people to another only in times of intimate and friendly intercourse, differing much from what we generally picture to ourselves as the relations between Christian and Saracen in the ages of the crusaders. These periods of peaceful intercommunication were those which are so indignantly denounced by the ecclesiastical historians for that laxity of manners, which allowed the champions of the Church to intermix with the infidels, and when the performances of the jongleur and the dancing-girls were

more attractive than the din of arms.* We meet with incidents, not only in the medieval romances, but in the drier pages of the chronicler, which show that it was not uncommon for Saracenic minstrels and jongleurs to follow their vocation in Christian countries. In the half historical, half legendary history of *Fulke fitz Warine*, one of the outlaws, "who knew enough of tabour, harp, viol, sitole, and jonglerie" (*savoit assez de tabour, harpe, viole, sitole, e jogelerie*), blackens his face and skin, and repairs to the court of king John in the disguise of a Moorish minstrel, and he is there welcomed, makes "much minstrelsy of tabour, and other instruments," and shows by his sleight-of-hand that he was a *bon jogelere*. The early romances furnish other instances of Moorish minstrels, or persons in that disguise, entertained at the courts of Christian barons and princes, and conversely of Christian jongleurs who visited the Saracens. The emperor Frederic II, celebrated for his love of letters, and for his enmity to the pope, was accused of having, while in Syria, in 1229, received into his palace Saracen guests, and of having caused Christian dancing-girls to play before them.† And, in 1241, when Richard earl of Cornwall visited the emperor, there were Saracenic dancing-girls and jongleurs

* Ex omni gente Christiana facinorosi, luxuriosi, ebriosi, *mimi*, *histriones*, hoc genus omne in terram sanctam tanquam in sentinam quandam confluxerat, eamque obscœnis moribus et actibus inquinabat. Guillelm. Neubrigens. de rebus Anglicis, lib. iii, c. 15. Compare the account given by Jac. de Vitriaco, Hist. Orient, cap. 73, p. 74, 83, who also particularises the jongleurs and minstrels.

† Item in palatio suo Achonensi fecit convivari Saracenos, et fecit eis habere mulieres Christianas saltatrices, ad ludendum coram eis. Matth. Paris. vol. ii, p. 361.

attached to the imperial court, who astonished him with their performances.* His papal enemies accused Frederic of keeping these infidel women for the indulgence of his passions (which they imagined to be a greater sin than incontinence with females who held the Christian faith); but he defended himself against this charge, on the ground that they were dancing-girls employed to afford entertainment to his court.

In the thirteenth century, the stories of the jongleur of Western Europe, put into easy French verse, became numerous under the title of 'fabliaux,' and a considerable number are still preserved in manuscripts. A very large portion of these *fabliaux*, as might be expected, may at once be traced to oriental prototypes, some of them being nearly identical with the Eastern originals, whilst others have been more or less modified in the course of transmission, to suit the difference in manners and religious creed of the people who adopted them. A good example of the kind of modification which they thus underwent, is furnished by the Arabian story of the *Hunchback*, which is the subject of at least two different *fabliaux* of the thirteenth century, and appears subsequently under other forms, both in

* Duæ enim puellæ Saracenæ, corporibus elegantes, super pavimenti planiciem quatuor globos sphericos pedibus ascendebant, plantis suis subponentes, una videlicet duos, et alia reliquos duos, et super eosdem globos huc et illuc plaudentes transmeabant; et quo eas spiritus ferebat, volventibus sphæris ferebantur, brachia ludendo et canendo diversimode contorquentes, et corpora secundum modulos replicantes, cymbala tinnientia vel tabellas in manibus collidentes, et jocose se gerentes et prodigialiter exagitantes. Et sic mirabile spectaculum intuentibus tam ipsæ quam alli joculatores præbuerunt. Matth. Paris. vol. ii, p. 569. This is a curious picture of the performance of the jongleurs.

French and English. It is not necessary to give more than a brief outline of the story in the *Thousand and One Nights*. The hunchback is regaled at supper by a tailor and his wife, and is choaked by a fish-bone. Fearing to be accused of murder, they carry him to a physician, and depart. The physician running against him in his haste, knocks the patient down, and, finding him without animation, supposes that he has been accidentally the cause of his death. He consults with his wife, and they determine to convey the body to the court of the house of a neighbour, who was the steward of the sultan's kitcher; the steward comes home in the night, and supposes the intruder to be a thief, strikes the hunchback with a mallet, and, as he imagines, kills him. In his distress, he carries the dead man into the street, and places him upright against a wall near the market. A Christian broker, in a state of intoxication, shortly afterwards passes by, and supposing the hunchback to be a person concealed there for the purpose of insulting him, strikes him down, and being caught in the act of beating the dead body, is at once accused of the murder.

In the early French versions of the story, a monk occupies the place of the hunchback, and the catastrophe arises out of an affair of gallantry. The first is entitled, *Du segretain moine*. The sacristan attempts to seduce the wife of a burgher, to whose house he is allured, and he is there immediately slain by the husband. The latter, to avoid discovery, carries the body through the postern of the abbey by which the monk had issued, and places him on a seat in one of the out-houses. Soon afterwards, the prior of the abbey comes to the place with a candle, and, supposing the sacristan to be asleep, attempts to rouse him

with a blow, and the body falls to the ground. The prior now finds that he is dead, and it being known that he had quarrelled with the sacristan the day before, he fears that he may be accused of murder. In this dilemma, he recollects that the sacristan had been observed to pay especial attention to the burgher's wife, and he carries him back to the door of the house in which he had been murdered. The burgher, hearing a noise at the door, opens it, and is thrown down by the weight of the body, which falls upon him. His wife, alarmed by her husband's cries, hastens to the spot with a light, and they are terrified to find the corpse returned. By the advice of the lady, the burgher carries it to the dunghill of a farmer who lived at some distance from his house, in order to bury it there. It happened that the farmer had cured a flitch of bacon, which he had left hanging in his pantry. A thief had succeeded in carrying it out of the house, and had buried it in a sack under the surface of the dunghill, intending to fetch it away in the night. The burgher, finding the sack, took out the bacon and carried it home, leaving the body of the corpulent sacristan in its place. Meanwhile, the thief was gambling with his companions in a tavern, and they proposed to sup on a portion of the stolen bacon. The thief hastened to the dunghill, found the sack, and bore it in triumph to the tavern;* but when the maid proceeded to empty it of its contents, the first object which presented itself was a pair of boots, and they then found that their booty had undergone a singular transformation. Unable to account for the change, they de-

* Chascun li crie *wilecomme*. The use of this latter word (*welcome*) proves the *fabliau* to have been written in England.

termined to make the farmer bear the consequences, and the clever thief who stole it carried the monk back, introduced himself into the house by stealth, and hanged the body up on the same hook which had held the bacon. In the morning the farmer awoke before daylight, hungry, and ill at ease; and while his wife was making a fire, he went in the dark to cut a slice of the bacon for their breakfast; but, handling it roughly, the beam, being rotten, gave way, and the weighty mass fell upon him. A light was now obtained, and they discovered a monk instead of a flitch, and recognised him for the sacristan of the neighbouring abbey. It would appear that his reputation was none of the best; and in order to get rid of him, they mounted the body on one of the farmer's horses, in an upright position, and fixed an old rusty spear in his hand. The horse being let loose, terrified at the shouts of the farmer and his wife, rushes through the court of the abbey, overthrowing the sub-prior and others in its way; and, finally, rolls exhausted into a neighbouring ditch, from which it is raised by the monks, who, finding their sacristan dead, suppose that he had become mad, that he had stolen the farmer's horse, and that he had been killed by the fall. The incidents in this story vary much from that of the *Hunchback*, although the outline is identical; but it is not improbable that other versions of the same story were once current in the East, and the *fabliau* may owe less to the imagination of the Western jongleur, than at first glance we are led to suppose.

A second *fabliau* on this subject is entitled, *Du prestre c'on porte;* and, like the one just described, it is printed in the collection of Barbazan. A priest, surprised by the injured husband, is killed, and the guilty wife, with

the assistance of her maid servant, carries the body out during the night, and places it against the door of a house which the priest was in the habit of visiting. The good man of the house opens the door, and is thrown down by the fall of the body, which is discovered to be that of the priest. By the advice of his wife, he carries the body towards the fields to bury it; but finding a peasant asleep, with his mare feeding beside him, he places the dead priest on its back, and returns home. The peasant wakes, and supposing that some one was stealing his mare, strikes him down with his staff, and then finds that it is a priest from the neighbouring monastery. The rustic then places the corpse upon his mare, with the intention of carrying it to a distance; but in his way he falls in with three robbers, who save themselves by flight, leaving behind them a sack containing a stolen 'bacon.' This he carries off, after having placed the body in the sack. The robbers return, find the sack, which appears not to have been touched, and carry it to a tavern, and the same incidents occur as in the former story, until the priest is suspended in the larder of the person from whom the bacon had been stolen. In the middle of the night, the chamberlain of a bishop who had come to visit the abbey (where he was anything but welcome), comes to the house to seek a supper, and the host discovers the body of the priest. After the departure of his guest, he carries the body to the abbey, finds the door of the prior's chamber open, and places it there against the wall. The prior coming to his room, and fearing to be accused of the priest's death, carries him to the chamber of the bishop, and places him on his bed. The latter, waking in the night, and feeling a heavy body on his bed, supposes it to be a dog, and, seizing a club,

beats it until a light is brought; and finding the priest slain, he buries him with due ceremonies the following day.

In some cases the incidents of the original story have been so strictly preserved in its transmission from the East, that it loses much of its point from its want of accordance with Western feelings. One of the most popular stories of the middle ages, which appears in a great variety of forms, is that of an old procuress, who undertook to persuade a beautiful and chaste wife to consent to the desires of a young man. The old woman has a little dog, to which she administers mustard with its food, and its eyes are filled with tears. She then pays a visit to the matron, who, naturally enough, asks why the dog weeps. The wicked woman tells her that the dog was her daughter, who had refused to listen to the prayers of a lover, and that, as a punishment, she had been changed, by sorcery, into the animal before her. The lady, believing this story, rather than incur the same fate, agrees to an appointment with her *amoureux*. This story was derived through the Arabians from India, where it is found in the large collection of stories entitled *Vrikat-Katha*. But it is much more intelligible in the Indian story, which depends on the Brahminic doctrine of the transmigration of souls; it was the soul of the woman pretended to have been cruel to her suitor, which had migrated into the body of the dog, an unclean animal, which was therefore looked upon as a grievous punishment. A similar incident is found in another popular medieval story. A simple countryman carried a lamb to market, and six rogues agreed together to cheat him of his merchandise. They took their stations in the six streets of the town through which he had to

pass, and each accosted him in turn with the question, "For how much will you sell your dog?" At first the rustic asserts resolutely that it is a lamb; but, finding so many persons in succession taking it for a dog, he becomes terrified, begins to believe that the animal is bewitched, and gives it up to the last of the six inquirers, in order to be relieved from his apprehensions. This story, in its original form, is found in the Indian collection entitled *Pantchatantra*; and we there understand better why the man abandoned the animal when he was persuaded that it was a dog, because this in the Brahminic creed is an unclean animal. Three rogues meet a Brahmin carrying a goat which he has just bought for sacrifice: one after another they tell him that it is a dog which he is carrying; and, at last, believing that his eyes are fascinated, and fearing to be polluted by the touch of an unclean animal, he abandons it to the thieves, who carry it away. The same story is found in several Arabian collections, and from them, no doubt, it came to the West.

The period at which the transmission of these stories from the East appears to have been going on most actively was the twelfth century. Besides the mode of transmission indicated above, which was the one that acted most largely, two or three of the more popular Eastern collections passed through a direct translation. The famous collection, which in the East went under the title of *Sendabad*, was translated into Latin at least early in the thirteenth century, and became very popular in almost every language of Western Europe, under the name of the *Romance of the Seven Sages*. The no less celebrated collection, entitled in the East *Calila and Dimna*, was also translated into Latin in the thirteenth century. Another collection, under

the title of *Disciplina clericalis*, was derived from the Spanish Arabs in the twelfth century, through a converted Jew named Peter Alfonsi. All these translations tended to extend the popularity of the Eastern stories in Western Europe.

This popularity was increased by another circumstance, which has tended, more than anything else, to preserve a class of the medieval stories, which were less popular as *fabliaux*, down to the present time. In the twelfth century there arose in the church a school of theologians, who discovered in everything a meaning symbolical of the moral duties of man, or of the deeper mysteries of religion. They moralised or symbolised in this manner the habits of the animal creation, the properties of plants, the laws of the planetary movements, the parts of a building, and the different members of the human body, romances and popular stories, and even the narratives of historical events. The stories of which we have been speaking were peculiarly adapted for this purpose, having been, in their eastern originals, frequently employed to illustrate moral themes; and the medieval divines, in thus adapting them, were only making a wider application of a mode of teaching, which had long been rendered familiar by the European fables.* In fact, this symbolical application began with fables, like

* Sir Frederick Madden, in the introduction to his edition of the English *Gesta Romanorum* (printed for the Roxburgh Club), points out a curious coincidence of a story found in an Arabian writer, with a morality nearly identical with the morality of the same story in a Latin collection of stories; but this by no means proves that the monkish system of moralizing the stories was derived directly from the East, which, indeed, is not probable.

those composed by Odo de Cirington in the twelfth century; and the distinction between these and many of the stories or *fabliaux* being not very strongly defined, it soon extended itself to the rest. In the thirteenth century these stories with moralizations were already used extensively by the monks in their sermons, and each preacher made collections in writing for his own private use. An immense number of manuscripts of this kind, chiefly of the fourteenth century, are still preserved. Many of the stories are evidently borrowed from one another; others appear to have been taken down from the recitation of the jongleur or common story-teller, and fitted at once by the writer with a moralization to serve as occasion might require. The mass of these stories are of the kind we have described above, and are evidently of Eastern origin; but there are also some which are mere medieval applications of classic stories and abridged romances, while others are anecdotes taken from history, and stories founded on the superstitions and manners of the people of Western Europe. Not only were these private collections of tales with moralizations, as we have just observed, very common in the fourteenth century, but several industrious writers undertook to compile and publish larger and more carefully arranged works for the use of preachers, who might not be so capable of making selections for themselves. Among these the most remarkable are the *Promptuarium Exemplorum*, the *Summa Prædicantium* of John Bromyard, the *Repertorium Morale* of Peter Berchorius, and some others. It was at some period of the fourteenth century, that a writer whose name is unknown, made a collection of these stories, which he put under the names of different supposed emperors of Rome, who are generally made the chief

actors in the various plots, This is the work which has been since so famous under the title of *Gesta Romanorum.*

The idea of giving this peculiar form to the stories seems to have originated in the caprice of the compiler; and classic ears are somewhat shocked by such names as those of the *emperors* Dorotheus, Asmodeus, and Polinius, mixed indiscriminately with those of Diocletian, and Claudius, and Vespasian. The date of the compilation of the *Gesta Romanorum* appears to be a matter of the greatest doubt; the arguments adduced by the editor of the Roxburgh Club edition of the early English text, to prove their antiquity, only prove that the stories themselves were popular before the compilation of this work, which is an incontrovertible fact. We are inclined to agree with Douce in thinking that there is no reason whatever for supposing Peter Berchorius to be the author. But this is a question of very little importance; for the *Gesta Romanorum*, like so many of the popular productions of the middle ages. represents the spirit and genius of the time much more than those of the individual writer.

We think that Douce acted somewhat inconsiderately in calling the common printed text the *original Gesta*, to distinguish it from the edition of the Latin text found in English manuscripts. It must, we think, strike every reader, that the printed Latin *Gesta* is not an original work, but a mere selection of stories from the *Gesta*, intermixed with much extraneous matter, taken from the classical writers and the medieval historians; and as no manuscript has yet been discovered which agrees with it, it is natural enough to suppose that it was printed from the selections of an individual, which was, perhaps, made for the press. It appears to us far from improbable that

the English Latin text is the original one, and, therefore, that the *Gesta Romanorum* was compiled in England. It is quite certain that this is the only one now known which is consistent and complete. While it is found in numerous manuscripts in this country, and is in all identical, the continental manuscripts of the *Gesta* are of the greatest rarity, and we have not met with two which agree with each other, each having the same appearance of being the capricious compilation of an individual from some common source. The English Latin text is supposed to have been compiled about the time of Richard II; the few manuscripts of the continental *Gesta* which we have seen are all of the fifteenth century. It is worthy of notice, as supporting our view of this question, that some of the manuscripts preserved in the German libraries contain stories which are in the English Latin text, but which are not found in the text of the printed editions. Professor Keller's edition is a mere reproduction of the old printed text; and we believe as yet nothing beyond the text has been published, so that we have still to look forwards with impatience for the opinions and information upon this curious subject of a man so learned in the history of medieval fiction.

The *Gesta Romanorum* is evidently the work of a man possessed of a considerable degree of creative imagination: it is possible that a few of the stories are of his own invention, but it is certain that many of them have undergone ingenious modifications in passing through his hands. Some of these stories are taken directly from the *Disciplina Clericalis* of Peter Alphonsi; as those of the 'Procuress and her Dog,' mentioned above (cap. 28), the story of the 'Three Fellow-travellers' (cap. 106), and several others.

There are several legends of saints, taken generally from the work of Jacobus de Voragine; such as the stories of 'Alexius' (cap. 15), 'Julian' (cap. 18), 'Pope Gregory' (cap. 81), &c. We have also a few stories taken from romances and popular *fabliaux;* and some from Grecian fables. The manner in which the latter are adapted to the ideas of the middle ages is singularly curious. As an instance we may quote the story of 'Argus' (cap. 111), in which Mercury is transformed into a medieval jongleur.

"A certain nobleman had a certain white cow, which he loved much for two things: first, because it was white; and secondly, because it gave abundance of milk. This nobleman ordained, in his great love for it, that the cow had two horns of gold: and he considered within himself in whom he could put trust to guard the cow. Now there was at that time a certain man named Argus, who was true in all things and had a hundred eyes. This nobleman sent a messenger to Argus, that he should come to him without delay. And when he had come, the nobleman said to him, 'I entrust my cow with golden horns to thy keeping, and if thou keepest her well, I will promote thee to great riches; but should her horns be stolen, thou shalt die the death.' And Argus took the cow with the horns, and led her with him; and every day he went with her to the pasture, and kept her diligently, and conducted her home at night. There was a covetous man named Mercury, very skilful in the art of music, who desired wonderfully to have the cow; and he was always coming to Argus, to try and get the horns from him for love or money. Argus fixed in the earth the shepherd's staff he held in his hands, and addressing it as though it had been his lord, said: 'Thou art my lord, this night I will come to thy castle.

Thou sayest to me, 'Where is the cow with the horns?' I answer, 'Behold the cow without horns: for a certain thief came while I was asleep and stole the horns away.' Thou sayest, 'O wretch, hadst thou not a hundred eyes? how came it that they all slept, and that the thief stole the horns? this is a falsehood.' And so I shall be the child of death. If I say I have sold it,' the danger is the same.' Then he said to Mercury, 'Go thy way, for thou wilt gain nothing.' Mercury went away, and the next day he came with his music and his instrument; and he began after the manner of a jongleur to tell tales, and ever and anon to sing before Argus, until two of Argus's eyes began to sleep; and then at his singing two other eyes slept, and so on, until they were all overcome with slumber. And when Mercury saw this, he cut off the head of Argus, and stole the cow with the golden horns."

This story is evidently abridged and modified from a much longer story, entitled *De Mauro Bubulco*, printed from a manuscript of the thirteenth century in the selection of Latin stories, published by the Percy Society, which, perhaps, was taken from an older medieval romance, founded upon the Grecian story. Another curious instance of the transformations which the classic legends underwent, is furnished by the following version of the story of Atalanta (cap 60.)

"There was a certain king who had an only daughter, very beautiful and graceful, named Rosimunda. This damsel, when she had arrived at the tenth year of her age, was so skilful in running, that she could always reach the goal before any one could touch her. The king caused to be proclaimed through his whole kingdom, that whoever would run with his daughter and should arrive at the goal

before her, should have her for his wife and be his heir to the whole kingdom; but that he who should make the attempt and fail, should lose his head. When the proclamation was made known, an almost infinite number of people offered themselves to run with her, but they all failed and lost their heads. There was at that time a certain poor man in the city named Abibas, who thought within himself, 'I am poor, and born of base blood; if I could by any way overcome this damsel, I should not only be promoted myself, but also all my kindred.' He provided himself with three devices: first with a garland of roses, because it is a thing which damsels wish for; secondly, with a girdle of silk, which damsels eagerly desire; and, in the third place, with a silken bag, and within the bag a gilt ball, on which was this inscription: 'Who plays with me will never be tired of playing.' These three things he placed in his bosom; and went to the palace and knocked. The porter came, and asked the cause of his knocking. 'I am prepared,' he said, 'to run with the damsel.' When she heard this, she opened a window, and when she had seen him she despised him in her heart, and said; 'Lo! what a wretch he is with whom thou must run!' But she could not contradict him, so she made herself ready for the race. They both started together, but the damsel soon ran a great distance before him. When Abibas saw this, he threw the garland of roses before her; and the maiden stooped down, and picked it up, and placed it on her head. She was so much delighted with the garland, and waited so long, that Abibas ran before her. When the damsel saw this, she said in her heart, 'The daughter of my father must never be coupled with such a ribald as this.' Immediately she

threw the garland into a deep ditch, and ran after him and overtook him; and when she overtook him, she struck him a blow, saying, 'Stop, wretch: it is not fit that the son of thy father should have me for his wife.' And immediately she ran before him. When Abibas saw this, he threw the girdle of silk before her; and when she saw it, she stooped, and picked it up, and put it round her waist, and was so much pleased with it, that she loitered there, and Abibas again ran a long distance before her. When the damsel saw this she wept bitterly, and tore the girdle in three, and ran after him and overtook him. And when she overtook him, she raised her hand and gave him a blow, saying, 'O wretch, thou shalt not have me for thy wife!' And immediately she ran a long way before him. When Abibas saw this, he waited till she was near, and then threw the silken bag before her. And when she saw this, she stooped and picked it up, and took out the gilt ball, and found the superscription, and read, 'Who plays with me shall never be tired of playing.' And she began to play so much and so long with the ball, that Abibas arrived first at the goal, and so obtained her for his wife."

Many of these stories, which otherwise we might be induced to consider as the inventions of the compiler of the *Gesta*, are found in earlier collections. The following (cap. 109) may be quoted as an instance: it inculcates the doctrine of fatality, which is still prevalent in the East, and which lingered long over the minds of our forefathers.

"There was a rich smith, who lived in a certain city near the sea; he was very miserly and wicked, and he collected much money, and filled the trunk of a tree with it, and placed it beside his fire in every body's sight, so

that none suspected that money was contained in it. It happened once when all the inhabitants were hard asleep, that the sea entered the house so high that the trunk swam, and when the sea retired it carried it away; and so the trunk swam many miles on the sea, until it came to a city in which was a certain man who kept a common inn. This man rose in the morning, and seeing the trunk afloat drew it to land, thinking it was nothing more than a piece of wood thrown away or abandoned by somebody. This man was very liberal and generous towards poor people and strangers. It happened one day that strangers were entertained in his house, and it was very cold weather. The host began to cut the wood with an axe, and after three or four blows he heard a sound; and when he discovered the money, he rejoiced, and placed it under safe keeping, to restore it to the rightful owner, if he should apply for it. And the smith went from city to city in search of his money, and at last he came to the city and house of the innkeeper who had found the trunk. When the stranger spoke of his lost trunk, his host understood that the money was his, and he thought within himself, 'Now I will try if it be God's will that I should restore him his money.' The host caused to be made three pasties of dough; the first he filled with earth, the second with dead men's bones, and the third with the money which he found in the trunk. Having done this, he said to the smith, 'We will eat three good pasties of excellent flesh which I have; you shall have which you choose.' And the smith lifted them one after another, and he found that the one filled with earth was the heaviest, and he chose it, and said to the host, 'If I want more, I will choose that next,' placing his hand on the pasty full of dead men's bones, 'you may keep the

third pasty yourself.' The host seeing this, said in his heart, 'Now I see clearly that it is not the will of God that this wretch should have the money.' He immediately called together the poor and the weak, the blind and the lame, and, in the presence of the smith opened the pasty and said, 'Behold, wretch, thy money, which I gave thee into thy hands, yet thou hast chosen in preference the pasties of earth and of dead men's bones, and thou hast done well, for it has not pleased God that thou shouldest have thy money again!' And immediately the host divided the money before his eyes among the poor: and so the smith departed in confusion."

This story is found in different shapes in manuscripts, written long before the period of the compilation of the *Gesta Romanorum*. In one, in the British Museum, written apparently at the end of the thirteenth century, it is told as follows:—

"A man who dwelt in the neighbourhood of Winchilsea collected money in a chest, with which he neither benefited himself nor others. Going one day to look at it, he saw a little black demon seated upon it, who said to him, 'Begone, this money is not thine, but it belongs to Godwin the smith.' When he heard this, unwilling that it should turn to any man's benefit, he hollowed out a great trunk of a tree, and placed the money in it, and closed it up, and threw it into the sea. The waves carried the trunk to the door of the aforesaid Godwin, a righteous and innocent man, who dwelt in the next town, and threw it on the dry shore the day before Christmas Day. Godwin happening to go out that morning, found the trunk, and rejoiced much to have such a log for the festival, and he carried it to his house and put it in the fireplace. On Christmas

Eve they lighted the fire, and the metal within the trunk began to melt and run out. When the wife of Godwin saw this, she took the log from the fire, and hid it. So it happened that the owner of the money was obliged to beg from door to door, while the smith from a poor man became suddenly rich. It was, however, soon known how the miser had thrown his money into the sea, and the wife of Godwin, seeing how the case stood, thought that she would give the wretch some help, and she made one day a loaf, and concealed forty shillings in it, and gave it to him. The beggar soon after met some fishermen on the shore, and sold the loaf for a penny, and went his way. And the fishermen coming as usual to the house of Godwin, drew out the loaf and gave it to their horses. But Godwin's wife recognising it, she gave them oats in exchange for it, and recovered the money. And thus the wretched man remained in poverty to the end of his life."

Another version of this story, differing little from the one last given, is printed in the selection of Latin stories published by the Percy Society, from a manuscript of the earlier part of the fourteenth century. It is also found in several other shapes, and in one in the Anglo-Latin text of the *Gesta Romanorum*, three caskets, each bearing an inscription, take the place of the three pasties. This is the original type of the incident of the caskets in the *Merchant of Venice*. We will give one instance of the manner in which stories from ancient history are perverted and moralized (cap. 43.)

"In a certain place in the middle of Rome, the earth once opened and left a gaping gulf. When the gods were consulted upon this, they gave for answer: 'This gulf will not be closed until some one will throw himself volun-

tarily into it.' But when they could persuade nobody to do this, Marcus Aurelius said, 'If you will allow me to live at my will in Rome for a year, at the end of the year I will joyfully and voluntarily throw myself in.' When the Romans heard this, they were joyful, and agreed to it, and denied him nothing. So he used their goods and wives at his pleasure for a year, and then mounting a noble horse, leaped headlong into the gulf, and immediately the earth closed."

The moralization runs thus:—"

"Rome signifies this world, in the middle of which is hell in the centre, which was open before the nativity of Christ, and an infinite number of men fell into it, whereupon we received an answer from the gods, that is, the prophets, that it would never be closed until a virgin should give birth to a son, who should fight for mankind against the devil, and his soul with divinity should descend to hell, from which time you are to know that it will never afterwards be opened, until some one open it by mortal sin."

The moralization here does not appear very applicable. But these symbolical interpretations are the most curious feature of the work. In the story of the 'Procuress and the little dog,' we are told that the chaste and beautiful matron is the soul cleansed by baptism, the young man who attempts to seduce her is the vanity of the world, the old woman who effects her ruin is the devil, and, which is the oddest of all, the little dog is "the hope of long life and too much presumption in God's mercy." In the story of 'Argus,' the white cow is the soul, the lord who possesses it is Jesus Christ, Argus represents the clergy to whose care the soul is intrusted, and Mercury is the devil. In the story of 'Rosimunda,' the lady is the soul "which *runs*

swiftly in good works as long as it remains in purity of life;" Abibas is the devil, who overtakes the soul by three stratagems: the garland, representing pride; the girdle, luxury; and the ball, avarice. And so with the rest. This style of moralization is characteristic of, and fitted for, a singular state of society, when the mass of the people were wholly uneducated and little accustomed to think for themselves, and it required broad material images to convey even spiritual ideas. Taking the collection as a whole, it gives us an extraordinary picture of the intellectual condition of an age which we can hardly understand so well in any other historical form, and we might, perhaps, be allowed to hazard one general moralization as a conclusion:—may we not look upon the whole collection as representing the construction of medieval civilization? The classic stories show the civilization of antiquity on which medieval society was founded, while the Gothic garb in which they are clothed is the spirit of the Germanic race which overran it; the monkish legends represent that baneful weight of papal church influence which checked civilization in its progress; and the beautiful apologues of the East, what are they but that Saracenic element, that spirit of movement which contributed so much towards the higher mental cultivation of modern Europe?

Professor Keller's edition of the *Gesta Romanorum* is, as we have observed, merely a careful reproduction of the early printed text; but we look forward with some degree of interest to his essay and commentary, which is to form the second part. We know no scholar of the present day better fitted for this task. We could wish, however, to see a good edition of the English text of the *Latin Gesta*, which in our opinion is the most ancient one, and which

is certainly the best. The *Gesta Romanorum* deserves a new edition less from any great interest possessed by the stories themselves, which are much inferior to the more common tales of the age, than as a monument of importance in the history of fiction; for it was once an extremely popular book, and it not only exercised a great influence on our literature down to so late a period as the seventeenth century, but it forms one of the most important links in the chain of transmission of popular stories from one age to another.

Before leaving this latter subject, and as a conclusion to our article, we will point out what appears to us a most remarkable instance of this transmission, and one which we believe has not been hitherto noticed. It is an example in which there is a singularly close resemblance in the incidents, and yet no apparent mode of accounting for it. Grimm and Schmeller, in their collection of medieval Latin poetry, published at Göttingen in 1838, printed a metrical story of an adventurer named Unibos; taken, as we are informed, from a manuscript of the eleventh century, though from its general character we should have been more inclined to look upon it as a production of the twelfth. Unibos, who was so named because he constantly lost all his cattle but one, had enemies in the provost, mayor, and priest of his town. At length, his last bullock dying, he took the hide to a neighbouring fair and sold it, and on his way home he accidentally discovered a treasure. He thereupon sent to the provost to borrow a pint measure. The provost, curious to know the use to which this is to be applied, watches through the door, sees the gold, and accuses Unibos of robbery. The latter, aware of the provost's malice, determines to play a trick upon him, which leads

him into further scrapes than he expected, though they all turn out in the end to his advantage. He tells the provost that at the fair to which he had been, bullocks' hides were in great request, and that he had sold his own for the gold which he saw there. The provost consults with the mayor and priest, and they kill all their cattle and carry the hides to the fair, where they ask an enormous price for them. At first they are only laughed at, but at last they become involved in a quarrel with the shoemakers, are carried before the magistrates, and are obliged to abandon their hides to pay the fine for a breach of the peace. The three enemies of Unibos return in great wrath, to escape the effects of which he is obliged to have recourse to another trick. He smears his wife with bullock's blood, and makes her lie down to all appearance dead. The provost and his companions arrive, and are horror-struck at the spectacle offered to their eyes; but Unibos takes the matter coolly, and tells them that if they will forgive him the trick he has played upon them, he will undertake to restore his wife to life and make her younger and more handsome than she had been before. To this they immediately agree, and Unibos, taking a small trumpet out of a wooden box, blows on it three times over the body of his wife, with strange ceremonies, and when the trumpet sounds the third time, she jumps upon her legs. She then washes and dresses herself, and appears so much more handsome than usual, that the three officials, who all possess wives that are getting old and are rather ill-favoured, give a great sum of money to possess the instrument, and each of them goes immediately and kills his wife, but they find that the virtues of the trumpet have entirely disappeared. They again repair to the hut of Unibos, who averts their vengeance by another trick, and extorts again a large sum of

money as the price of his mare. In this they find themselves equally cheated, and they seize upon Unibos, whose tricks appear to be exhausted, and give him only the choice of his death. He requests to be confined in a barrel, and thrown into the sea. On their way to the coast, his three enemies enter a public-house to drink, and leave the barrel at the door. A herdsman passes at this moment with a drove of pigs, and, hearing a person in the barrel, asks him how he came there. Unibos answers that he is subjected to this punishment because he had refused to be made provost of a large town. The herdsman, ambitious of the honour, agrees to change places with him, and Unibos proceeds home with the pigs. The three officials continue their journey, and in spite of the exclamations of the prisoner in the barrel that he is willing to be provost, they throw him into the sea; but what is their astonishment on their return at meeting their old enemy, whom they supposed drowned, driving before him a fine drove of pigs. He tells them that at the bottom of the sea he had found a pleasant country where there were innumerable pigs, of which he had only brought with him a few.

Respondet, "sub prodigio
Maris præcipitatio;
Ad regnum felicissimum
Fui per præcipitium.
Inde nunquam recederem,
Si non amassem conjugem,
Quam vidistis resurgere
Veracis tubæ murmure.
Non fuit culpa bucinæ,
Sed bucinantis pessime,
Omnes si vestræ feminæ
Modo stertunt sub pulvere."

The greedy officials are seduced by his tale, and throw themselves from a rock into the sea, and Unibos is thus delivered of his enemies.

The *Contes Tartares* of Gueulette, which are believed to be only imitations of oriental tales, though they are, probably, mixed with stories of an Eastern origin, were published in 1715. The adventures of the 'Young Calender,' in this collection, are the exact counterpart of the story of 'Unibos,' which it is quite certain that Gueulette never saw. The young calender having been cheated by three sharpers, in a manner similar to the story of the 'Rustic and his Lamb,' mentioned in the earlier part of the present essay, is eager to be revenged, and having two white goats, resembling each other, he goes with one of them to the market where he had been cheated. The three men, who are there seeking opportunities of depredation, immediately enter into conversation with him, and in their presence he buys various articles of provision, and placing them in a basket on the goat's back, orders the animal to inform his servant that he had invited some friends to dinner, and to give her directions how each of the different articles are to be cooked, and then turns it loose. The sharpers laugh at him; but in order to convince them he was in earnest, he asks them to accompany him home. There, to their astonishment, they find the dinner prepared exactly according to the calender's directions; and in their hearing, the calender's mother, who was in the secret, and who acted the servant, tells her son that his friends have sent to excuse themselves, and that the goat had delivered his orders, and was now feeding in the garden, where, in fact, the other white goat was browsing on the plants. The calender invites the sharpers to

join in his dinner, and ends by cheating them of a large sum of money in exchange for the supposed miraculous goat. Finding the animal endowed with none of the properties they expected, they return to take revenge on the calender. He receives their reproaches with surprise, calls in his pretended servant, and asks why she neglected to give them a particular direction relating to the goat which he had forgotten, and she makes an excuse. In a feigned passion he stabs her in the belly, and she falls down covered with blood, and apparently dead. The three men are horror-struck at this catastrophe; but the calender tells them not to be alarmed. He takes a horn out of a little casket, blows it over the body, and his mother, who only pretended to be killed, arises, and leaves the room unhurt. The three sharpers, in the sequel, buy the horn for a great sum of money, return home and sup with their wives; and after supper, anxious to try the virtues of the horn, they pick a quarrel with the ladies, and cut their throats. The horn proves as great a failure as the goat; and the police, who have been attracted by the noise, force their way in, and seize two of the sharpers, who are hanged for the murder; the third escapes. The latter, some time afterwards, meets with the calender, puts him in a sack, and carries him off with the intention of throwing him into a deep river. But on his way he hears the approach of horsemen, and, fearing to be discovered, he throws the sack into a hole beside the road, and rides off to a distance. A butcher now arrives with a flock of sheep, and, discovering the calender in the sack, proceeds to question him. The calender says that he is confined there because he will not marry the cadi's daughter, a beautiful damsel, but who has been guilty of an indiscretion. The butcher, allured

by this prospect of advancement, agrees to take his place in the sack, and the calender marches off with the sheep. The sharper then returns, and, in spite of the promises of the butcher to marry the cadi's daughter, throws him into the river. But on his way back, he is astonished to meet the calender with his sheep. The latter tells him, that when he reached the bottom of the river, he found a good genius, who gave him those sheep, and told him, that if he had been thrown further into the river, he would have obtained a much larger flock. The sharper, allured by the love of gain, allows himself to be confined in a sack, and thrown into the river.

The third form of this story we owe to our best of story-tellers, Samuel Lover. Most of our readers will remember the legend of 'Little Fairly,' first published in the *Dublin University Magazine*, and afterwards inserted in the *Legends and Stories of Ireland*, (1837.) Little Fairly and Great Fairly were the sons of one man, by two wives; the latter inherited the estates, and lived with his mother in prosperity, while Little Fairly inherited only one cow, and dwelt with his mother in a rude hut. The elder brother, who tyrannises over the younger, kills his cow. Little Fairly takes the hide to a fair, and by a trick sells it for a hundred guineas. On his return, he sends to ask for his brother's scales to weigh his money; and the latter, in his curiosity to know why his brother wanted the scales, comes to the hut, discovers his brother's riches, and charges him with robbery. Little Fairly tells him that the money was the proceeds of his hide, an article which then fetched a great price at the fair. Great Fairly was a greedy man, and, resolving not to lose the occasion, killed all the cattle on his estate for the sake of their hides; but

when he came to the fair, instead of selling his merchandise, he was dreadfully beaten, in revenge for the trick played by his brother. As soon as he has recovered from the effects of his beating, he goes to his brother's hut, and by accident kills Little Fairly's mother. Little Fairly turns this also to advantage, and obtains fifty guineas, which he represents as having been the price given for his mother's body by the doctor in the neighbouring town. His avaricious brother immediately goes and kills his own mother, and carries her body to the doctor, but narrowly escapes being delivered to public justice for the murder. Great Fairly, in revenge, seizes his brother, puts him in a sack, and carries him off, with the intention of throwing him into a bog. He stops at an inn on the way to drink, and leaves his brother in the sack, outside the door. A farmer passes by with a herd of cattle, which he is persuaded to give Little Fairly, to be allowed to take his place in the sack, and he is thrown into the bog. Great Fairly, on his return, meets his brother with his cattle, and is informed that he had found a country at the bottom of the bog, abounding in herds, and that when he had carried these home, he proposed to return for more. Great Fairly, eager to be before his brother, jumps into the bog, and is drowned.

We here find the same story, at three widely different periods, and in different countries—in Germany, in the eleventh or twelfth century, in France (if Gueulette's story be not taken from an Eastern collection) in the eighteenth century, and in Ireland at the present day. The resemblance is too close to be accidental; it is certain that neither of the two other writers could have been acquainted with the story of 'Unibos,' and we do not think it probable

that our friend Lover borrowed anything from Gueulette. In fact, the Irish story contains several incidents of resemblance to 'Unibos,' which are not found in the French. The story is not found in writing, in any document which could have formed a medium of transmission. It must, therefore, have been preserved in all these countries traditionally. It is in this manner that the influence of the early popular literature has been continued down to the present time. The fables and legends now current among the peasantry are the fictions of the middle ages.

ESSAY XIII.

ON THE POETRY OF HISTORY.

ARIOUS writers have undertaken to build romance upon history, but few, except those who have occupied themselves with researches into its sources, are aware how much of history itself is nothing more than legend and romance. In the first place, much which appears as serious matter of fact will not bear a close examination. Facts are conveyed to us, through the chroniclers of the time, disfigured by the prejudices of religious and political partisans, or exaggerated in their passage from one relater to another. The history of England abounds in stories of this kind, the falsity of which is only discovered from time to time in accidental researches. A singular instance was pointed out, some time ago, by Mr. Hunter, who was enabled to correct it, by discovering the original rolls of accounts relating to the event which was the subject of it. One of the persons most deeply implicated in the murder of king Edward II, in Berkeley Castle, was Sir Thomas de Gournay, who subsequently made his escape to the Continent. One of our latest historians, Dr. Lingard, tells the sequel of his story thus: "Gournay fled into Spain, and was apprehended by the magistrates of Burgos. At the request of

the king of England, he was examined by them, in the presence of an English envoy. What disclosures he made were kept secret: but we may suppose that they implicated persons of high rank, as the messengers who had him in charge received orders to behead him at sea, on his way to England." This is the account of Gournay's fate given by all historians, and founded upon contemporary writers: he was said to have accused queen Isabella, and some of the more influential of her partisans. But we learn from Mr. Hunter's documents, that Gournay, having been set at liberty by the authorities of Burgos, was finally captured at Naples; and we have the account of expenditure by the persons who had him in charge during the whole of their journey, until they appeared before king Edward in England. They carried Gournay first, by sea, to Aigues-Mortes, and thence to Perpignan, and they were then obliged, by accidental circumstances, to shape their course through Spain, and so to Bayonne and Bordeaux. During this journey, large sums are frequently paid to physicians for attending the prisoner, which proves both that he was labouring under severe illness, and that his guardians were anxious to carry him home alive. At Bayonne we find the last payments to physicians, and their payments for embalming his body, so that he died there, and his body was brought thence to Bordeaux, and afterwards to England. Thus the common account of his death is a mere fabrication. This, however, is rather the fable than the poetry of history.

Strict historical truth has received injury from another source. During the middle ages, an immense number of romantic stories floated from country to country, and from mouth to mouth. These frequently took a colouring from

place and circumstances, became located, and were handed down to us as historical facts. The first example of this kind of location of stories which presents itself, is the well known incident of the death of Henry IV of England, who expired in the Jerusalem chamber, it having been foretold that he should end his days in Jerusalem. Shakespeare has adapted this incident with great effect:

" K. Hen. Doth any name particular belong
Unto the lodging where I first did swoon?
War. *'Tis call'd Jerusalem*, my noble lord.
K. Hen. Laud be to God!—even there my life must end.
It hath been prophesied to me many years,
I should not die but in Jerusalem;
Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land;—
But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie—
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die."

This story had been told of other persons long before the time of Henry IV. Pope Sylvester II—the famous Gerbert—who was the subject of many legends in after-times, died at the beginning of the eleventh century. Among other things, he is said to have had recourse to supernatural agency, in order to foreknow the length of his life, and was told that he should not die until he entered Jerusalem. Satisfied with this answer, he followed his worldly pursuits in perfect security, until one day, while performing divine service in a church in Rome, which he had never entered before, he was suddenly seized with sickness, and, accidentally inquiring the name of the church, he was told that it was popularly called Jerusalem. The pope immediately confessed himself, and prepared for death. This tale is not only told of other

persons, but it appears in a variety of forms. According to a story of the fourteenth century, a certain person consulted the devil, and received for answer that he should not die until *he entered into a glove.* He soon afterwards came to the town of *Gaunt* (Ghent,) and there he died.

It is wonderful how many stories of this class have crept into our history. The following occurs in a Latin manuscript, and appears to be at least as old as the thirteenth century. A wealthy English baron, who had extensive possessions in England and Wales, had three sons; when lying on his death-bed, he called them to him and said—"If you were compelled to become birds, tell me what bird each of you would choose to resemble?" The eldest said, "I would be a hawk, because it is a noble bird, and lives by rapine." The second said, "I would be a starling, because it is a social bird and flies in coveys." The youngest said, "And I would be a swan, because it has a long neck, so that if I had anything in my heart to say, I should have plenty of time for reflection before it came to my mouth." When the father had heard them, he said to the first, "Thou, my son, as I perceive, desirest to live by rapine: I give thee my possessions in England, because it is a land of peace and justice, and thou canst not rob in it with impunity." To the second, he said, "Because thou lovest society, to thee I give my possessions in Wales, which is a land of discord and war, in order that thy courtesy may soften down the malice of the natives." And to the younger, "To thee I give no land at all, because thou art wise, and wilt gain enough by thy wisdom." And as he foretold, the youngest son profited by his wisdom, and became chief justice of England, which, in those times, was the next dignity to that of king. An old chronicler

tells a similar story of William the Conqueror. The monarch was one day pensive and thoughtful; his wise men inquired the cause; and he stated that he wished to know what would be the fate of his sons after his death. The wise men consulted together, and at length it was proposed that they should put questions separately to the three princes, who were then young. The first who entered the room was Robert, (afterwards known by the surname of Courthose.) "Fair sir," said one of the wise men, "answer me a question: if God had made you a bird, what bird would you wish to have been?" Robert answered, "A hawk, because it resembles most a courteous and valiant knight." William Rufus next entered, and his answer to the same question was, "I would be an eagle, because it is a strong and powerful bird, and feared by all other birds, and therefore it is king over them all." Lastly, came the younger brother Henry, who had received a learned education, and was on that account known by the surname of Beauclerc. His choice was a starling, "because it is a debonaire and simple bird, and gains its living without injury to any one, and never seeks to rob or grieve its neighbour." The wise men returned immediately to the king. Robert, they said, would be bold and valiant, and would gain renown and honour, but he would finally be overcome by violence, and die in a prison; William would be powerful and strong as the eagle, but feared and hated for his cruelty and violence, until he ended a bad life by an equally bad death; but Henry would be wise and prudent, peaceful unless when compelled to war; he would gain wide lands, and die in peace. When king William lay on his death-bed, he remembered the saying of his wise men, and bequeathed Normandy to

Robert, England to William, and his own treasures, without land, to his younger son Henry, who eventually became king of both countries, and reigned long and prosperously.

King Alfred's visit to the Danish camp in disguise of a harper, is another story of this kind. The same stratagem is said to have been reacted a few years later, the parties being reversed, when one of the Danish chieftains, before the battle of Brunanburh, visited in the same disguise the camp of king Athelstan. This was a very common story in the middle ages, and is found applied to a multitude of persons, in history as well as in romance. In fact, in the early romances, no disguise is so frequently used by a spy as that of a minstrel; because the minstrel was a sort of neutral personage, who was allowed to pass everywhere—he was thus, also, the chief popular instrument of conveying news from one country to another.

Such stories as these are highly poetical; they are not history, yet they enliven the otherwise dry pages of the annalist, without detracting, in any important degree, from his truth. They have become thus located, because they are characteristic of the person on whom they are fixed, and they may be considered as a form in which popular feeling has enregistered its opinion of the individual. These may truly be termed the poetry of history.

Popular tradition generally misrepresents the actions, but not the character of its hero, who is soon enlisted into a number of fabulous or half-fabulous adventures. If humility be joined with his bravery, he becomes the hero of such tales as that of king Alfred watching the cotter's cakes, and submitting to insult and scorn from the ill-tempered housewife; if only brave, we find him slaying lions and dragons; if pious, his life is a series of miracles. Here we

have the source of many a purely poetic narrative, which makes its way into the pages of the historian, to puzzle those who try, in vain, to measure the degree of absolute truth which they would fain detect in it. It is surprising how soon historical personages become invested with romantic attributes, which often originated in popular songs.

The popular mythology of the people also had its influence. Thus the legend of mighty princes, carried away from the earth, to be restored in future ages, exists in the historical traditions of all countries. The German peasant still looks forward to the reappearance of the emperor Frederic, as a few ages ago the Welsh and Bretons expected the return of king Arthur. Long after the battle of Hastings there were men who believed that king Harold had escaped from the slaughter, and this tradition has been a matter of discussion in our days. In the latter part of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese believed that king Sebastian had not perished in the fatal expedition against the Moors; but that he was still living in disguise among his native mountains. Even recently there were people in France who looked forward to the resuscitation of Napoleon.

In the fine old English ballad of *Adam Bel, Clym of the Clowghe, and William of Cloudesle,* the captured outlaw gains the king's favour by shooting an apple placed on his son's head.—

"And there, even before the kynge,
In the earth he drove a stake,
And bound therto his eldest sonne,
And bad hym stande styll ther-at;
And turned the childes face fro him,
Because he shuld not sterte.

An apple upon his head he set,
And then his bowe he bent.
Syxe score paces they were out met,
And thether Cloudesle went;
There he drew out a fayr brode arrowe,
Hys bowe was great and longe;
He set that arrowe in his bowe,
That was both styffe and stronge.
He prayed the people that was there
That they would stylle stande;
For he that shoqteth for such a wager,
Behoveth a steadiast hand.
Muche people prayed for Cloudesle,
That hys lyfe saved myght be;
And whan he made hym redy to shote,
There was many a weping eye.
Then Cloudesle clefte the apple in two,
That many a man myght se.
'Ouer Gods forbode,' sayde the kinge,
'That thou shote at me!' "

This incident occurs as a historical fact in the ancient northern historian, Saxo Grammaticus. Sprenger, an early writer on these matters, in his *Malleus Maleficarum*, has a chapter *de Sagittariis Maleficis*, where he relates the same story of one Punkler, a magician of Rorbach, in the diocese of Worms; and, if our memory be not very treacherous, we have read in one of the old treatises on spirits and witchcraft, a similar story of a hobgoblin which shot an apple off a child's head. Every one knows how this incident has taken a historical shape in the personage of William Tell.

The influence of this poetic creativeness, if we may use such a word, not only pervades all parts of our national

history, but contributed largely to the formation of an interesting class of particular histories, of which unfortunately but few specimens remain. These are the half historical and half romantic lives of persons, the memory of whose actions, or whose fate, had made them notorious. They contain at once all the different classes of poetic fiction which are above enumerated as being scattered over the pages of general history; yet they, without doubt, give us a true picture of the individual, and of the character of his age,—far truer than that furnished by the annalist or by the critical historian. One of the most remarkable histories of this class is the life of the Saxon Hereward, who held out for several years, with a band of followers, against the Norman Conqueror, in the wild marshy districts of Ely and Peterborough, and whose marvellous adventures were collected and woven into a narrative early in the twelfth century; for the compiler speaks of having conversed with those who had been personally acquainted with his hero. He confesses that many of his stories had been preserved in a poetical form, and we know, from other authorities, that the adventures of Hereward were the ordinary subject of popular songs during the greater part of the twelfth century. Some parts of the life of Hereward are undoubtedly fabulous; but we cannot hesitate in regarding the whole story as a true picture of the struggle between the last of the Saxon heroes and the oppressors of his country. We have two similar histories of personages who flourished in the reign of king John: one, an outlawed baron—a true Robin Hood—named Fulke fitz Warine; the other a renegade monk employed by John, who was believed to have had dealings with the evil one, and who was popularly known by the name of Eustace the Monk.

ESSAY XIV.

ADVENTURES OF HEREWARD THE SAXON.

I.—DESTRUCTION OF THE NORMANS AT BRUNNE.

N the 14th of October, 1066, the dynasty of the Anglo-Saxon kings was overthrown, in one long, desperate, and sanguinary combat—the battle of Hastings. The Norman conqueror at first pretended that he had fought only for a throne to which he was entitled, and he promised that *his* people should be molested neither in their laws nor in their property. But he gradually and insidiously introduced his Norman soldiers into the possessions of the vanquished, until he made his position sufficiently strong to throw off altogether the ill-sustained mask. Then followed a period of spoliation and ravage. The bravest of the Saxons took to the woods and the morasses, became outlaws, and lost no opportunity of plundering and destroying their oppressors, in revenge for the injuries which had been inflicted upon their country.

On a calm evening, in the year 1068,* ill-assorting with

* The date of our hero's return is fixed, by the annals of John abbot of Peterborough—"Anno MLXVIII, Herwardus de partibus transmarinis rediens in Angliam ad hæreditatem suam, et reperiens regem Normannis eam contulisse, occisis occupantibus cœpit contra regem dimicare."

It may be right to observe, that our history of Hereward is taken, almost literally, from the *Gesta Herwardi Saxonis*, (preserved in a MS. of the twelfth century,) compared with the chronicles of the time.

the political turbulence and confusion around, a stranger, whose stature was below the ordinary standard, but whose form exhibited great muscular strength, whose mien and bearing told of lofty deeds of prowess, and whose complexion bespoke a pure Saxon origin, entered the village of Brunne, in Lincolnshire, the chief manor of the noble earl Leofric. He had with him one attendant, light armed like himself, and clothed for a long journey on foot; for the Anglo-Saxons made no great use of horses. The stranger turned into a house at the entrance of the village, and demanded hospitality of its tenant, a Saxon knight and one of earl Leofric's dependents, who received him with a Saxon welcome. But the faces of the inmates bore marks of intense sorrow and dejection, and, in answer to his questions, they told him that their lord was dead, that a Norman had been sent to usurp his possessions, and that they were on the point of being delivered over to the rapacity of the invaders. When requested to give a more particular account of their misfortune, the host said—"It is little consistent with the rites of hospitality to make our guest a partaker in sorrows which, perhaps, it is not in his power to alleviate. Nevertheless, since it is thy will, know that, until yesterday, the younger child of our ancient lord, the heir to his possessions, unless his elder brother Hereward, a brave soldier, but now absent in some far distant land, should return, was living amongst us. He and his mother were recommended to our protection by our lord on his death-bed. Yesterday the Normans came and seized upon his house; they demanded the keys and the treasures, and the youth slew two of the intruders, who would have laid violent hands upon his parent. The wretches killed the boy, and have fixed his head ignominiously above the

door-way. Alas! we have no power to revenge him. Would that his brother Hereward were here! before to-morrow's sun rises they would all taste of the same bitter cup which they have forced upon us!" The stranger listened to the tale, and groaned inwardly.

After they had partaken of the evening meal, the family retired to rest; but their guest lay sleepless and thoughtful on his bed, until suddenly the distant sounds of singing and music, and shouts of riotous applause, burst alternately upon his ears. He sprang from his couch, roused a serving man of the house, and, inquiring the meaning of this tumult, was informed that the Norman intruders were celebrating the entry of their lord into the patrimony of the youth they had murdered the day before. The stranger put on his arms, threw about him a large black cloak which concealed him from observation, and, with his companion in a similar garb, proceeded through the village to the place of boisterous revelry. There, the first object which met his eyes was the ghastly head, which he took down, kissed, and wrapped in a cloth, and then the two adventurers placed themselves in the dark shade within the doorway, whence they had a full view of the interior of the hall. The Normans were scattered around a blazing fire, most of them overcome with drunkenness, and reclining on the bosoms of their women. In the midst of the hall was a jongleur or minstrel, who chaunted songs of reproach against the Saxons, and ridiculed their unpolished manners in coarse dances and ludicrous gestures. He was proceeding to utter indecent jests against the family of the youth whom they had slain, when he was interrupted by one of the women, a native of Flanders. "Forget not," she said, "that the boy has a brother named Hereward,

who is famed for his bravery throughout the country whence I come; if he were here, things would wear a different aspect to-morrow." The new lord of the house, indignant at the boldness of the speaker, raised his head, and exclaimed, "I know the man well, and his wicked deeds, which would have brought him ere this to the gallows, had he not sought safety in flight; nor dare he now make his appearance anywhere on this side of the Alps."

The obsequious minstrel seized on the theme thus started by his lord, and was proceeding to the most violent invectives, when he was cut short in an unexpected manner—he sank to the ground, his head cloven by the blow of a Saxon sword, and the stranger, who had been a concealed spectator, rushed upon the defenceless Normans, who fell one after another beneath his arm, those who attempted to escape being intercepted by his companion at the door. The heads of the Norman lord and fourteen of his knights were quickly raised over the door-way in place of that of the youth they had murdered.

The stranger was Hereward the Saxon, accompanied by his old and trusty follower, named, from his agility, Martin with the Light Foot.

When it was known that Hereward was returned, the Normans who had settled in the neighbourhood fled in consternation, and the injured Saxons rose on every side, and hastened to join his banner. Hereward checked, at first, the zeal of his countrymen; but he selected a strong body of his kinsmen and family adherents, and with them he attacked and slew such of the Norman invaders as had been bold enough to remain on his paternal estates. He then repaired to his friend Brand, the Saxon abbot of Peterborough, from whom he received the honour of knight-

hood in the Anglo-Saxon manner; for amongst our Saxon ancestors it was always given by the clergy. After suddenly attacking and killing a Norman baron who had been sent against him, Hereward dispersed his followers, promising them to return within the space of a year, acquainted them with the signal by which his arrival should be made known, and then proceeded to Flanders.

II.—HEREWARD'S YOUTHFUL ADVENTURES.

Hereward was the son of Leofric, earl of Chester and Mercia, and of that lady Godiva who has been immortalized in the legendary annals of Coventry. From his boyhood he had been distinguished among his companions by his strength and boldness; and, as he grew up, his adventurous disposition gave rise to continual feuds and tumults, which, with various acts of insubordination towards his parents, drew upon him the enmity of his family. He is accused of having, on different occasions, collected some of his father's rents to distribute among his wild followers; and his kinsmen were often obliged to raise their tenantry in arms to rescue him from some imminent danger into which he had fallen through his temerity. Earl Leofric at length procured an order from king Edward the Confessor to banish him from his country, and at the age of eighteen he was driven from his home, with only one attendant, a serf of the family, named Martin with the Light Foot, who appears to have possessed the same adventurous spirit as himself. From this time he was known as Hereward the Exile.

The marvellous adventures of Hereward, during the period of his exile, fill several chapters of the ancient

biography. When he left his father's house, he first directed his steps towards the borders of Scotland, where he was received into the household of a rich and powerful thane, named Gisebert of Ghent, his godfather. Here again his restless courage exposed him to jealousy and hatred. Gisebert kept a number of wild beasts of different kinds, which, at the festivities of Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas, he let out, to try the strength and courage of the youths who were candidates for the honour of knighthood. Among the rest, he had a large and fierce Norwegian bear, which was carefully chained up in its cell. One day this terrible animal escaped by accident from its place of confinement, slew every person it met, and spread terror through the house. Hereward rushed forth to meet it, and, encountering it singly, as it was hurrying towards the apartment devoted to the ladies of the family, after a desperate struggle, succeeded in destroying it. By this action he secured the favour of the ladies, but the envy of his companions knew no bounds: and after having narrowly escaped a plot laid against his life, he left the house of Gisebert in disgust, and proceeded to the extreme part of Cornwall, which was then governed by an independent British chief.

The Cornish chief was named Alef; he had a beautiful and accomplished daughter, who appears by the sequel to have bestowed her affections upon an Irish prince, but her father had promised her hand to one of her own countrymen, a bad and tyrannical man, although popular among the Cornishmen for his extraordinary strength and valour. To this man Hereward soon became an object of hatred, which broke out into an open quarrel in the hall, at a feast, when Hereward answered his boastful taunts against

his countrymen in such a manner as to excite the mirth of the princess. The result was a single combat in a wood near the palace, in which Hereward, by his skill and agility, overcame and slew his more powerful adversary. The Cornishmen, enraged at the loss of their champion, called loudly for vengeance. Their chief, however, who seems to have promised his daughter more from fear than inclination, shielded Hereward from their violence, under pretence of throwing him into prison to await his judgment; and the lady gave him the means of escaping secretly, with tokens of remembrance and recommendation to the Irish prince, and to the king, his father.

Soon after his arrival in Ireland, Hereward was joined by two of his kinsmen, named Siward the White and Siward the Red, who brought him intelligence of his father's death, and urged him to return home to his mother. He remained only to assist the king at whose court he was living in a war against another Irish king, in which he again signalized himself by his daring exploits.

Meanwhile, the Cornish princess was betrothed by her father to another suitor, and she sent a messenger in haste to the Irish prince, to tell him of the near approach of the day fixed for her wedding, and to beg his assistance in averting it. He was at this moment engaged with Hereward in a predatory descent on the coast of Cornwall, and he immediately sent forty of his soldiers as messengers, to claim the lady's hand, in fulfilment of a former promise of her father. Hereward, suspicious of the result of this message, took with him his three companions, and having disguised himself, by colouring his face and staining his hair, he arrived on the day of the nuptial feast, and learnt that the Irish messengers had been thrown into prison,

and that the intended bridegroom was to carry home his wife on the following day. Hereward and his companions boldly entered the hall at the wedding feast, and seated themselves at the lowest places of the tables. The eyes of the princess fell upon the stranger—she thought that she recognized the form of Hereward, but his face was unknown to her; yet a string of recollections passed through her mind, and she burst into tears. She then called one of the attendants, and ordered him to serve the strangers; but Hereward's affected rudeness, with some words that dropped from his mouth, excited her suspicions. It was the custom at this time in Cornwall, that, after dinner on the day before she left her father's house, the lady in her bridal robes should assist her maidens in serving round the cup to the guests, while a harper went before, and played to each as the cup was offered to him. Hereward had made a vow, at parting with the Irish prince, that he would receive nothing at a lady's hands until offered by the princess herself; and when a harper and one of the maidens approached him with the cup, he refused to accept the draught, or listen to the minstrel. The reproaches of the latter, and the indignant exclamations of the guests, reached the ears of the princess, and increased her suspicions; she came herself to offer the cup, and it was respectfully accepted. She had now no doubt that the stranger was Hereward, and, unseen by the rest, she threw a ring into his bosom, while, turning to the company, she excused the rudeness of one who was unacquainted with their customs.

The minstrel, however, remained dissatisfied, and continued to reproach the stranger for his breach of the respect due to men of his profession, until Hereward seized the

harp from his hands, and, to the astonishment of all present, touched the chords with exquisite skill. He was requested to proceed, and, fearful that a refusal might raise suspicions, he again played on the harp, and, not only accompanied it with his own voice, but his companions joined at intervals, "after the manner of the Saxons." The bride, to aid him in his assumed character, sent him a rich cloak, the common reward of successful minstrels; and her husband, unwilling to be behindhand in his liberality, offered him any gift he would ask, except his wife and his lands. Hereward reflected a moment, and then demanded that he should liberate the Irish messengers who had been unjustly imprisoned. The prince was at first inclined to grant his request, when one of his followers, who was no friend of minstrels, exclaimed, "This is one of their base messengers, who is come to spy thy house, and to mock thee by carrying from thee thy enemies in return for his frivolous performances." The suspicions of the Cornish chief were easily roused, and, fearing to raise a tumult by any mark of disrespect shown to the privileged class of minstrels in the festive assembly, he ordered the doors of the hall to be narrowly watched. But Hereward was apprized of the danger by the princess, and made his escape with his companions.

When they had got clear of the precincts of the house, the fugitives followed the road along which the Cornish chief and his bride must pass, and concealed themselves in a wood on the banks of a river which formed the boundary of this petty kingdom. The prince had determined to carry with him to his own territory the Irish messengers, purposing to deprive each of them of his right eye, and then send them home. When he came to the river, and

just as part of his men had passed the water, Hereward and his companions rushed from their hiding place, slew the Cornish chief, and released the Irishmen from their bonds. With their assistance they put the rest of the attendants to flight, mounted their horses, and carried away the princess. On the second night, they reached the camp of the Irish prince, who was marching with his army to avenge the insult offered him in the person of his messengers; and it is hardly necessary to say that the marriage between the two lovers was immediately solemnized.

Hereward accompanied them to Ireland, and then prepared to return with his friends to England. They left Ireland in two ships, well-stored and armed, but a sudden tempest, in which one of the ships was lost, drove them beyond the Orcades, and as soon as they had turned the northern extremity of Scotland, a second storm carried them to the coast of Flanders, and wrecked them in the neighbourhood of St. Bertin's. At first they were arrested as spies, but, when Hereward's name and condition were known, the count of Flanders received him with hospitality, and joyfully accepted his assistance in the wars in which he was engaged. His prudence and bravery soon carried his name far and wide, and gained him the affections of a noble damsel named Turfrida, whom he married. In the midst of his successes, and when he seemed to have nearly forgotten his home and relatives, the news arrived that his country had fallen a prey to the Norman invader, and he afterwards learnt the wrongs which had been done to his own kinsmen. It was under these circumstances that Hereward entrusted his wife to the care of his tried friends, the two Siwards, and repaired to England, to ascertain the truth of the various reports which had reached him.

III.—HEREWARD RETURNS TO ENGLAND.

At the time appointed, in the year 1069, Hereward returned to his native land, bringing with him his companions in arms, the two Siwards, with other Saxons who had joined him in his exile, and his wife the beautiful Turfrida. Finding that, since the catastrophe which had attended his former visit, his paternal estates had remained unoccupied by the Normans, he proceeded direct to Brunne, where some of the bravest of his kinsmen and friends were on the look-out for him; and he then made the signal which had been agreed upon, by setting fire to three villas on the highest part of the Brunneswold. He was soon at the head of a gallant band of Saxon outlaws, who crowded to him in the forest, whither he had retired to await the result of his signal. Hereward's historian has taken no small pride in recording the names of the most distinguished of these brave men who joined the last of their ancient lords in raising the standard of rebellion against the Conqueror; some of which are curiously significant of the precarious life they led in those troubled days, and of the acts of prowess which had marked their individual opposition to the invaders. There was Leofric the Mower (Moue), so called because being once attacked by twenty armed men whilst he was mowing alone in the field, with nothing but his scythe to defend himself, he had defeated them all, killing several and wounding many. Then there was another Leofric, named Prat, or the cunning, because, though often taken by his enemies, he had always found means to escape after having slain his keepers. With them also was Wulric the Black, so named because on one occa-

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sion he had blackened his face with charcoal, and thus disguised, had penetrated unobserved among his enemies, and killed ten of them with his spear before he made his retreat; and Wulric Hragra, or the Heron, who, passing the bridge of Wroxham when four brothers unjustly condemned to be hanged were led by that road to the place of execution, had ventured to expostulate with their guards, but the latter called him in mockery *a heron*, and he rushed upon them, slew several, drove away the rest, and delivered their prisoners. With men like these were joined not a few of the sons of the old Saxon nobility, who had been, like Hereward, deprived of their patrimony, and who, like him in this also, disdained to bow the knee to the tyrant.

These, however, were not the only Saxons who were then in arms, for at this moment a show of patriotic resistance had manifested itself in various parts of England. Among others, the monks of Ely, with their abbot Thurstan, fortified themselves in their almost inaccessible island among the wild fens, and were there joined not only by many of the Saxon ecclesiastics and nobles, among whom were archbishop Stigand, (whom the Normans had deposed from the metropolitan see of Canterbury,) bishop Egelwin, (who had been similarly deprived of his see of Lincoln,) and the earls Edwin, Morcar, and Tosti, but their strength was also recruited by a party of Danes who came to their assistance. The isle of Ely was soon known as the camp of refuge, and many of the injured Saxons made their way to it through the wild country round, alone or in small parties, for the Normans began to watch the approaches. Its defenders, as soon as they heard of the arrival of Hereward, sent a deputation to urge him to unite his strength with theirs, and he

determined to abandon the open country, and to join in the incipient rebellion in the marshes. At this time he appears to have been in the heart of Lincolnshire, for we are told that he took ship with his followers at Bardney, whence they descended the river Witham towards the sea. The powerful Norman earl of Warren, who had obtained extensive possessions in Lincolnshire, and who hated Hereward for the slaughter of one of his kinsmen, had been made acquainted with Hereward's proceedings by spies, had set parties of Norman soldiers in ambush along the banks of the river to intercept him when he landed. The Saxons were involved in continual skirmishes with these assailants, but it was not until they had accidentally captured one of them, that Hereward was made aware of the earl of Warren's plots, and of his intention to come the next day with a powerful body of knights and others to Herbeche, where probably he knew that the narrowness of the river, or some other cause, would enable him to stop the further progress of the outlaws. But Hereward succeeded in reaching the spot before the appointed time, passed the dangerous part of the river with his ships, and landed his men on the shore opposite to Herbeche, and concealed the greater part of them among the brushwood, whilst himself, with three knights and four archers, well armed, stood on the bank of the river. The earl of Warren and his men arrived soon afterwards on the opposite bank, and a Norman soldier, perceiving the Saxons, shouted to them across the river, reproaching them with their lawless lives, and threatening them with the vengeance of the Conqueror, who, he said, was bringing a mighty army to drive them out of their stronghold. One of Hereward's companions gave the Norman a scornful answer, and told

him to inform his master that he might now have a chance of seeing the man he was so diligently seeking. The earl of Warren, hearing the noise, came down to the waterside, and understanding that it was Hereward who stood before him, ordered his men to swim across the water and attack him. But the Normans expostulated, for they knew well that the Saxon chief would not be there unprepared to receive them; and the earl was venting his rage in empty threats and reproaches, when Hereward suddenly snatched a bow from the hand of one of his companions, and bending forward a little, let fly an arrow, which struck with so much force on the breast of the Norman chief, that, although the point was turned by his armour, he fell almost senseless from his horse, and was carried off by his attendants. The Saxons went on board their ships, continued their voyage, and were received with joyful acclamations in the isle of Ely.

Hereward was now the leader of most of the hostile expeditions undertaken by the Saxons of the isle of Ely. Shortly before his return to England, his friend Brand, abbot of Peterborough, died, and thus escaped the wrath of king William, whom he had offended by several acts of patriotism. A Norman ecclesiastic, named Turold, or Thorold, who had gained an unenviable notoriety by his tyranny over the Anglo-Saxon clergy, was appointed in his place. The Norman abbot was escorted to Peterborough by a military guard. But Hereward, after making a vain attempt to induce the monks of Peterborough to follow the example of resistance set them by the monks of Ely, determined that the stranger should at all events find an empty house. Turold made a halt "with his Frenchmen" at Stamford, in order to obtain intelligence of the kind of

reception he was likely to meet with, and thither came the sacristan of Peterborough, named Yware, who, hearing of the approach of the outlaws, seized upon the more portable of the treasures confided to his care, which, as it happened, were not the most valuable, and fled. Hereward and his men arrived in their ships at Peterborough early in the morning of the second of June, 1070, and demanded an entrance into the monastery; but finding that the monks had shut the gates, and were unwilling to admit them, they set fire to the adjoining houses, and burnt all the monastery, except the church, and nearly all the town. Then, to use the words of the *Saxon Chronicle*, which gives the best account of the attack upon Peterborough, "they went into the church, climbed up to the holy rood, took there the crown from our Lord's head, which was of pure gold, and also the footstool which was under his feet, which was likewise of solid gold; they mounted up into the steeple, and brought down the mantle which was hid there, which was all of gold and silver; they took there two golden shrines and nine shrines of silver; they took also fifteen great crosses, some of gold and some of silver; and they took there so much gold and silver, and such great treasure in money and garments and books, that no man can count it. They said they did this to have security of the church." The monks, however, delivered up the church—or rather the bare walls—to Turold, and the Saxons looked upon their treasures as forfeited, and divided their booty with their Danish auxiliaries, who, satisfied with what they had gained, left the island and sailed for their native country.

IV.—THE SIEGE OF ELY.

King William was gradually approaching his army to invest the fen country which surrounded the Isle of Ely, and he began the attack at a moment when the insurgents had been weakened by many causes. Earl Morcar, trusting to the insidious promises of the Norman, had ventured to his court, and had been treacherously committed to prison; earl Edwin, in an attempt to raise an insurrection in the North, had been betrayed into the hands of his enemies, and mercilessly slain; and the Danish allies had departed with their booty. The king established the main body of his army at a place called Abrehede, where the waters and fens were narrowest, and there, with immense labour, a long, narrow road, or bridge of timber, was constructed, on which the Normans were to march over the more difficult part of the intervening space. But the soldiers rushed forward hastily and incautiously, allured by the reports of the great riches which had been gathered together by the outlaws; and suddenly the frail structure gave way under the weight of man and armour, and the Norman warriors were plunged headlong into the marshes, where they were quickly borne down by the weight of their arms. In this manner perished the greater part of the besieging army. The king was an eye-witness of the disaster; and he sorrowfully relinquished his enterprise, leaving, however, strong garrisons on the border of the fens, to protect the country from the incursions of the outlaws. The destruction of the Norman army was long remembered in the neighbourhood; and the writer of Hereward's life assures us that he had fre-

quently seen the fishermen drag up the remains of the victims, still covered with their rusty armour.

One Norman knight alone reached the Isle of Ely, and he was immediately siezed and carried to Hereward, who received him kindly, kept him a few days, showing him the strength and resources of the place, and the mode of life of its defenders, and then gave him his liberty, on condition that he should give the king a faithful account of all he had seen. The knight strictly fulfilled his promise; and the Norman monarch was beginning to talk of offering favorable terms to the Saxon insurgents. But the earl of Warren, and another powerful baron, Ivo Taillebois, interfered. The latter was lord of Spalding, and the chief supporter of his neighbour, the abbot of Peterborough. He was one of those who had most distinguished themselves by their tyranny over the Saxons, and was proportionally hated by them. The opinion of these two barons was that of the courtiers in general, who feared to lose the lands of the outlaws which they occupied; and they urged the king to another attempt. Ivo Taillebois said, "I know an old woman who would be a match for all the Saxons in the island, and it would surely be disgraceful for a king to retreat without having effected his object." Being required to explain his meaning, Ivo stated that he knew a certain sorceress whose enchantments were so powerful, that he doubted not she would be able to paralyse the force of the islanders, and make them an easy prey to the besiegers. It was finally agreed that the woman should be sent for, and that they should try the effects of her incantations.

Meanwhile the Normans watched more and more closely all the approaches to the island, and the outlaws could no longer obtain intelligence of the designs of their enemies,

although it was darkly rumoured that they were to be attacked in some new and extraordinary manner. At length Hereward determined to go to the court in disguise. He took with him his favorite mare, named Swallow, which, though nearly as swift as the bird from which it was named, was a lean-looking, ill-favoured animal; and, dressed in coarse and dirty garments, with his hair and beard close shaven, he made his way through the fens unobserved. The first person he met was a potter, and a new scheme immediately suggested itself to him. Hereward bargained for the pots, provided himself with all things appertaining to the trade, and proceeded to Brandune, where the king was then holding his court, offering his ware for sale by the way. At Brandune Hereward took up his lodging at the very house in which dwelt the witch who was to be employed against the outlaws, with a companion who followed the same dark practices as herself. At night Hereward overheard the two women discoursing of the manner in which they were to proceed against the islanders. Their conversation was carried on in the Norman language, and with the less reserve, because they little thought that an English dealer in pots knew any other language but his native Saxon. At midnight they left the house and proceeded to a fountain which flowed towards the east. There they performed mysterious ceremonies, addressing questions to the fountain, and then listening as for an answer. Hereward had stolen after them unseen; and more than once he was tempted to draw his sword, and put them to death in the midst of their unhallowed observances, but he thought that by forbearance he should obtain further information. In the morning he took his station in the vicinity of the court.

"Pots! pots!" cried Hereward sturdily; "good pots and urns! here is your excellent pottery!" and the servants of the king's kitchen, who were in want of these articles, called him in.

At this moment the reeve of the town came on some business to the kitchen, and saw the merchant of pots. "It is strange," said the reeve, "but I never saw one man resemble another so closely in shape and stature, as this potter resembles the outlaw Hereward, barring his dress and trade."

All who heard this crowded round the potter to see a man like Hereward; and he was led into the king's hall to be exhibited to the knights and courtiers. One of them asked if he knew the wicked outlaw whom he resembled? "Know him," said he, "alas! I know him too well. Would that he were now here that I might be avenged upon him! It was but the other day that he robbed me of a cow and four sheep, which were all I had in the world, except my mare and these pots, to support myself and two children."

It was now the hour of repast, and the servants of the king's kitchen began to attend to their different functions. After dinner, however, the king being gone to follow the chace in the surrounding woods, the servants made merry, and brought forth wine and ale, and conspired to make the potter drunk; but in this they reckoned without their host, for a Saxon hero was the last man in the world to be outdone in drinking. The consequence was that, while Hereward remained perfectly master of himself, the cooks and kitchen-men became more and more uproarious, until they seized upon their guest, were proceeding to shave his crown like that of a monk, and proposed to make him

dance blindfold in the middle of his pottery. Hereward showed resistance, and one of the cooks struck him with his hand. The spirit of the Saxon fired up, he struck the assailant to the ground with his fist, and seizing a weapon which was laying near, a scuffle ensued, in which several of the servants of the kitchen were killed, or severely wounded, before the potter was secured and shut up in an adjoining room. One of the guards then came with fetters to bind the prisoner; but Hereward rushed upon him, snatched the sword from his hand, slew all who opposed his progress, and after leaping over one or two hedges and ditches of defence, reached the outer court, mounted his mare, which he had left there, and darted off towards the woods, closely pursued by as many of the guards and others as had been able to get horses. But away went Hereward through wood and over plain, distancing all his pursuers but one, who followed him to the isle of Someresham, where he found himself at the mercy of the man he was pursuing, and was deprived of his arms, and only allowed to escape with his life that he might bear to the Norman king a message from Hereward the Saxon.

Innumerable were the tricks employed by Hereward to deceive the enemies of his country, who in the hot season, when the fens were driest, made their approaches again towards the island. The king led his army to a place which the old writer calls Alreheche, and there began to erect immense works of timber and earth, from which to conduct his hostile operations. For this purpose he ordered all the fishermen of the fens to assemble with their boats at Cotingelade, there to receive his orders. When these works were far advanced towards completion, Hereward one day, disguised as a fisherman, came in his boat with

the rest. At night the workmen departed, and the army retired from its labours. But when darkness had set in, the alarm was suddenly given that the fortifications were on fire, and in a few hours the labour of many days was utterly destroyed. The historian observes, drily, that where Hereward was busy in the day it would have been strange if some mischief had not happened before night.

The witch was at last brought forward to terrify the outlaws by her incantations. An elevated frame of timber had been placed in an advanced position among the fens, the top of which commanded a distant view of the island and monastery; and the Norman soldiers were placed among the reeds and brushwood ready to rush forward when the sorceress had done her part. She was placed on the frame, and began by uttering curses against the island and all its inhabitants; these were followed by a multitude of strange ceremonies and exorcisms, accompanied by fearful contortions and postures. All these were to be repeated thrice; and she was beginning the third time, when the outlaws, who had been gradually advancing under shelter of the surrounding thickets, set fire to the dry reeds in front and rear. The flames rushed forth on every side with a fearful crackling. The witch sprang in terror from the scaffold, and was killed by the fall; and hundreds of devoted Normans perished in the fire or in the water. Hereward and his men pursued singly or in parties those who escaped; and the result of this second attack upon the island was more disastrous to the Normans even than the first. The king himself was among the fugitives; and when he reached his tent, a Saxon arrow was found fixed in his armour. In his despair and rage he cursed the advisers who had led him to put his trust in sorcery.

V.—HEREWARD QUITS THE ISLAND.

In 1072, the Isle of Ely, defended by its surrounding marshes and the bravery of the Saxon outlaws who had fortified it against the Norman invaders, had already held out nearly three years against the repeated attacks of king William's armies. Treason, however, at last prevailed, where open force had been unsuccessful. The monks of Ely, wearied with the uneasy mode of life to which they were exposed, and alarmed still more by the intelligence that all the possessions of their monastery had been confiscated, entered into secret negotiations with the king, and it was agreed that they should admit the Normans into the monastery, which was the outlaws' chief fortress, while the Saxon insurgents were dispersed in search of provisions and adventures. It was probably their intention to capture Hereward, the great leader of the Saxon patriots; but he was secretly informed of the treacherous plan at the moment of its execution, and assembling as many of his men as were at hand, he threatened to burn both town and monastery, (as he had previously done Peterborough), unless the latter was immediately delivered into his hands. This bold demonstration was, however, too late, for the Normans had already gained the monastery, and the town was spared at the intercession of some of Hereward's friends. The Saxons made a desperate resistance, until, overpowered by numbers, a large part of them were put to the sword. One of the old chroniclers tells us that no less than a thousand of the insurgents were slaughtered on this occasion. Of those who were taken alive, many had their hands cut off, and their eyes put out, and were, in this condition, set at

liberty. Such of their leaders as fell into the hands of the conqueror were imprisoned in some of the strong castles which he had built in different parts of the island.

In one object, however, the Normans were unsuccessful. Hereward, with only six of his companions, bravely fought their way through the enemy, and escaped into the marshes, where their pursuers were unwilling to follow. The Saxon fishermen of the fens were necessary to the Norman army which besieged the marshes, because they supplied it with much of its provisions, and they were, therefore, allowed to follow their occupation in peace; although they were devoted to the cause of their countrymen. One of these received the seven fugitives in his boat, concealed them at the bottom under a heap of straw and reeds, and proceeded with his cargo of fish to a point occupied by one of the numerous guards of Normans placed around the fens to hinder communication between the isle of Ely and the surrounding country. The fisherman and his companions were well known to the Norman soldiers, who were commanded by a knight of rank, and their arrival caused no suspicion. While they were occupied in landing the provisions, Hereward and his followers escaped from the boat, and concealed themselves in the adjacent bushes, until the Normans, in the greater security, because they supposed that the island and its defenders were already in the power of the invaders, had seated themselves negligently at their evening meal. Hereward fell suddenly upon them in this defenceless condition; all who resisted were slain; a few made their escape; and the outlaws seized upon their horses, and thus mounted they proceeded to gather together their scattered companions, and to raise the standard of revolt in the wild woodlands which spread over much of

the neighbouring counties of Huntingdon, Northampton, and Lincoln, and thither repaired such of the outlaws of Ely as had not been present in the disastrous struggle from which their chieftain had so narrowly escaped. The first hamlet they came to increased their number to eighteen; by the time they passed Huntingdon, Hereward had collected above one hundred brave men; and before the sun arose on the following morning, seven hundred Saxons, well armed, were assembled in the deep recess of the Brunneswald, to resist the oppressors of their country. Their daring exploits, and the devastations they committed on the property of the Norman intruders, soon proclaimed to the mortified king that the capture of the Camp of Refuge at Ely had not subdued the spirit against which he was contending, and he ordered the entire forces of the counties of Northampton, Cambridge, Lincoln, Leicester, Huntingdon, and Warwick, to be raised under the command of Ivo Taillebois and the Norman abbot of Peterborough.

Still, however, Hereward continued his desultory warfare, sometimes defeating the parties sent in pursuit of him, and sometimes deceiving them by clever stratagems, when his companions were not numerous enough to withstand them in fight. It is recorded that, among other tricks, the Saxons had the shoes of their horses frequently turned backwards, so that when the Norman soldiers fell into their track, they were sure to take the wrong direction in the pursuit. In this manner Hereward kept his enemies constantly on the alert; and his name was looked upon with such terror, that it was commonly said that three Normans would fly at the sight of one of the Saxons; and Hereward himself is reported to have beaten singly

seven Normans on more occasions than one. His deeds were the admiration even of his enemies; some of the young Norman knights left their families, and took oaths of fidelity to the Saxon chieftain, in order to be partakers in his adventures and in his fame.

One day Ivo Taillebois, hearing that Hereward, with no more than a hundred knights, and about two hundred footmen, were sojourning in a wood which might be easily surrounded, joined all the forces he could collect with those of the abbot Turold, and they went together against him. Hereward for some time kept his enemies at bay with his skirmishing parties, but at length he was obliged to post his small army in the strongest position he could, and prepare for a general attack from an enemy far superior in numbers. It was agreed among the Normans that the abbot of Peterborough, with some of the Normans of highest rank, should keep guard on the outside of the wood, whilst Ivo Taillebois, with the larger part of their army, penetrated into it to attack the outlaws in their intrenchments. For sometime Hereward withstood the attack bravely and successfully; and then suddenly the Saxons gave way, and made a hasty retreat. The Normans, exulting in their victory, followed after; but while they were slowly forcing their way through the entangled thickets, Hereward and his companions, who had executed a new stratagem, turned them by a quick march, fell unexpectedly upon the party placed under the command of abbot Turold, killed many of them, and mounting their footmen upon the Norman horses, carried the abbot and the more wealthy of his companions into the deep recesses of their forest home, where it was in vain to pursue them, and they only released their captives on

the payment of heavy ransoms. From the abbot of Peterborough, who was an especial object of their hatred, the outlaws extorted the immense sum at that time, of 30,000 marks of silver.

No sooner had the abbot Turold thus obtained his liberty, than he showed his eagerness for revenge; and he even offered the treasures and possessions of his church to allure soldiers to join in his design. When Hereward heard of this, he determined to pay another visit to the abbey of Peterborough. Equally rapid in conceiving and executing his plans, he suddenly made his appearance at night-fall of the very day on which he had received intelligence of Turold's proceedings. The abbot, fortunately for himself, escaped, and concealed himself from his pursuers. But the outlaws burnt the town, which was probably now inhabited entirely by Normans, and plundered the church of its treasures. These, however, were restored, in consequence of a dream which Hereward was said to have had the following night.

Hereward's next hostile expedition was directed against the town of Stamford, which had served as a place of refuge to some of his bitterest enemies. He marched, as usual, in the night, and his expedition was carried on with so much silence and secresy, that it was commonly reported and believed that the Saxons were attended on their way by spirits of the wood, bearing lights visible only to them, and that their guide was a large white wolf, which disappeared as the break of day found them at the end of their journey. The town, taken by surprise, was occupied without resistance; and in this instance Hereward exhibited his generosity by liberating and pardoning his enemies.

VI.—HEREWARD'S DEATH.

In the midst of these daring exploits, measures were suddenly taken to procure a reconciliation between Hereward and the Norman king, to which the former listened less from his despair of now being able to liberate his country from servitude, than by the persuasions of a beautiful and wealthy widow, with whom he appears to have carried on an intrigue, and who had great power at court. We are informed by his biographers that Hereward's first wife, Turfrida, whom he thus deserted after she had been his faithful companion and adviser in his misfortunes, was to be placed as a nun in the abbey of Croyland, that he was to receive his pardon, quit his lawless life, and be married to the lady Elfrida, for that was the widow's name. As the two first conditions were fulfilled, we are left to suppose that the marriage took place; but it is said that he afterwards acknowledged that he was never fortunate in his undertakings after this act of weakness and ingratitude. He repaired to William's court with forty of his bravest companions, and was received with marked attention and favour by the conqueror. Yet the Norman barons never ceased to regard the Saxon soldiers with envy and hatred, which sometimes broke out into open broils, in which the impetuosity of Hereward's temper afforded a pretext to his enemies, who accused him before the king, and laid to his charge many crimes of which he appears to have been innocent, and he was committed to custody at Bedford, under the charge of Robert de Horepole, where he remained in chains a whole year.

As many of Hereward's friends and followers as had

remained with him, when they heard of his imprisonment, again congregated in their old haunts, the woods, and held secret communion with him by means of his clerk, named Leofric, who visited his prison in the disguise of a milkman. At length Leofric brought them intelligence, that on a certain day Hereward was to be conducted to the castle of Buckingham, to be delivered to the keeping of his old and greatest enemy, Ivo Taillebois. Having obtained exact information, by means of spies, of the road by which he was to be carried, the Saxons placed themselves in ambush in a wood through which the convoy was to pass, suddenly attacked Hereward's guards, who were defeated, after a desperate struggle, and the hero was delivered from his chains by his old and faithful followers. Robert de Horepole, who had been an indulgent keeper to Hereward, was taken prisoner in the scuffle; but he was immediately liberated, and, in consequence of his representations to the king, Hereward was again pardoned, and restored to his lands.

But although Hereward had thus obtained the peace of the king, it did not secure him that of the Norman barons, his enemies, who sought every opportunity of attacking him. He was more than once besieged in his own house, and he could not venture abroad without a strong body of armed soldiers to defend him; even at his meals, when it was the hospitable custom to eat with open doors, he was obliged to place a vigilant watchman at a short distance from his house, to warn him against the approach of his foes. One day his chaplain, Ailward, who acted as sentinel during Hereward's dinner, fell asleep at his post. A strong party of Normans and Bretons took advantage of this circumstance to carry their long-cherished designs into execu-

tion. Hereward was totally unarmed, but he seized upon a shield, a lance, and a sword which lay near, and rushed out with his old companion-in-arms, named Winter, to meet his assailants. "Traitors," he said, "your king has given me his peace, yet you come here to take my goods, and slay me and my friends. Though you have taken me unarmed, at my dinner, you shall have no cheap bargain of me!" The first to advance was a knight, who sought to revenge many of his friends and companions-in-arms slain by the Saxon insurgents, but Hereward at the first blow thrust his spear through his body, and he fell a corpse to the ground. Then the Normans attacked Hereward from all sides, with lances and swords; but, though soon covered with wounds, he defended himself "like a wild boar;" when his spear was broken, he betook himself to his sword, and when that also was rendered useless, he took his shield in his right hand and used it as a weapon. Fifteen of the assailants had already fallen by his arm, when four of his enemies came behind him, and buried their spears in his back. Hereward fell upon his knees, but with his last effort he hurled his shield at a knight of Brittany, named Ralph de Dol, who was advancing to attack him. The Saxon hero and the Breton knight fell dead at the same instant. A Norman cut off Hereward's head, and carried it away as a trophy. Such was the end of the last champion of Saxon liberty.* "It was com-

* This account of Hereward's death, which appears to be the most authentic, is given by Geoffrey Gaymar. The compiler of the Latin life of the hero leaves us to suppose that he ended his days in peace; but other authorities give us better reason for believing that he came to a violent death. One writer says that he was slain in a broil with his Norman son-in-law.

monly supposed," says the writer who has preserved the account of his death, "that had there been only four such men, the Normans would have been long ago driven out of the land."

"Si jura Dieu et sa vertu,
Et li autre qui l'ont veu
Par meinte foiz l'ont juré,
Que oncques si hardi ne fut trové;
Et s'il eust eu od lui trois,
Mar i entrassent li François;
E s'il ne fust issi occis,
Touz les chaçast fors del pais."—*Gaimar.*

ESSAY XV.

THE STORY OF EUSTACE THE MONK.

HOW volatile a thing is fame! After a few ages have passed by, the very name is forgotten of the men who have been amongst the most famous in their day,—whose actions have been the favorite theme which the peasant sung over his ale, and whose praise has been listened to no less attentively in the feudal hall of the nobles. Who is there now, who has heard of the name of Eustace the Monk? Yet, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, his name was sufficient to strike terror into the hearts of our countrymen; and, after his death, the supernatural agencies which he was supposed to have used, raised everywhere their wonder, as much as the right merry tricks which he played upon his enemies excited their laughter.

We have asked, Who at the present day has heard of the name of this man? It is true, however, that his name was known to some,—to the few who have spent their lives or their leisure in searching through old chronicles, and who have there found mention of this most wicked man (*vir flagitiosissimus*)—this traitor and villanous pirate (*proditor et pirata nequissimus*)—this archpirate (*archipirata*)—this apostate (*apostata*)—this oppressor from Spain (*ty-*

rannus ex Hispania)—this ruffian,—all which terms, and more, are there applied to him. But the ground of these appellations was unknown, until the life of this extraordinary man, written by a contemporary, in Norman-French verse,* was discovered in a manuscript of the Royal Library at Paris, among a collection of metrical *fabliaux*, romances, and saints' legends. Among the latter class the present poem seems to have been placed by those who had previously made use of the manuscript, and who, therefore, read no more than the title, Eustace the Monk; which will easily account for its having remained so long unknown, though many poems from the same volume have been printed.

The history of Eustace presents to us a striking picture of those scenes of violence and oppression which were every day witnessed during the baronial wars, and of which we find many traces in our ancient chronicles.

Eustace was born in the territory of the count of Boulogne. While young, he went to Toledo, in Spain, at that time the grand school of the black art, to be well instructed in the mysteries of magic; and the story tells us that he was there favoured to such a degree, that, in his cave under the earth, he conversed with the evil one himself, no small advantage to him that would be a proficient in these sciences. He remained here, says the story, a winter and a summer, and became expert in all sorts of conjurations. Before his departure, in his last conversation with the devil, the latter gave Eustace a faint outline of his future destinies, telling him that he should live to make war

* Roman d'Eustache le Moigne, pirate fameux du xiiie siècle, publié par Francisque Michel. Paris, 1834.

against nobles and princes, and that he should not die until he had been concerned in many commotions, after which he should be killed on the sea. From Toledo he returned directly to St. Saumer, where he became a black monk.

On his way, it seems that Eustace was accompanied by three of his fellow-students, one of whom, we learn, was an old man with a beard, who had spent twenty years at Toledo, and who was, therefore, a great magician. One night they came to Montferrant, where Eustace exhibited some of his devilry. On the morn of his departure, he ordered a dinner for himself and his companions, at the tavern of a rich hostess, who, we are told, was very high and very proud. The character and appearance of the pilgrims appear not to have gained her good will; and the strange coins which they offered her in payment—for they had none of such as were passable in the district—were viewed with indignant contempt. Her charge was exorbitant, and her treatment of the guests any thing but gentle. Eustace was piqued, and, by the help of his magic, he took a ludicrous, but not very decent, revenge upon the hostess and her townspeople. Some of the latter followed the pilgrims on their way, against whom the old man with the beard, whose turn it was now to practise his art, caused a great river to arise, as large as the Seine, or the Loire, which followed close at their heels, and drove them back to the town. Eustace and his companions pursued them: and, in the town, the old fellow with the beard, by another conjuration, set the townspeople so by the ears, that they fought together, tooth and nail, without any discrimination.

After leaving Montferrant, Eustace and his companions

overtook a carter, who was leading a waggon, drawn by four horses, and containing a cask of wine, to a distance of six leagues along the road they were journeying. The pilgrims demanded of the carter for how much he would carry them to the town where he was going. "For twelve pence," was the answer. "Agreed," said Eustace; and, the bargain being thus concluded, they mounted, and travelled along at a rattling pace. The carter, however, beat the horses unmercifully: the latter pushed forward at an uneasy rates, making great leaps, so that the jogging of the vehicle bruised the nether parts of Eustace in a most miserable manner. "God send thee evil," exclaimed he to the carter, "for the villanous pace at which thou art driving us!" "Good sir," replied the latter, "we have no time to lose; I must use all speed, for I think it is already past noon." To a second expostulation, his only answer was a few more lashes on the backs of the horses, and the cart was dragged along as violently as before. The old man with the beard began a new conjuration, and immediately the horses and the cart, instead of proceeding, seemed to be going backward. The carter, as every carter would have done, spared neither oath nor whip upon his beasts; but all was vain, and at last he was obliged to let the pilgrims go scot-free, who gladly left him, with their money in their purses.

Such is the legendary story of our hero previous to the time of his becoming a monk of St. Saumer. When Eustace took on himself the religious habit, he laid aside none of his former unholy practices. The whole abbey was troubled by his conjurations, and he turned every thing upside down; causing the monks, as the story informs us, to fast when they ought to have been eating,

and, when they ought to have worn their shoes, to go barefoot. A thousand errors he led them into, when they ought to have been gravely performing the holy services.

One day, the father abbot was in his chamber: he had been bled, and had walked, and a large repast was prepared for his refreshment. There was plenty of pork, and mutton, and wild geese, and venison. Eustace, who lost no opportunity of playing his tricks, came to the abbot, when he was commencing his dinner, offered himself as a servant, and said that, after he had partaken of his repast, he would tell him what was his craft. "Thou art a fool," replied the abbot; "may evil fall upon my neck, if thou shalt not be well beaten to-morrow." "Many a one lives who has been threatened," said Eustace; and, leaving the abbot's room, he went into the kitchen. There, he saw, first, a pail full of water, which, by his conjurations, became quickly red like blood. Then he seated himself upon a stool, and, looking round, he saw near him the half of a pig. In the hearing of all who were present he pronounced his charms, till the half pig suddenly jumped up, and took the semblance of an old woman, ugly, and crooked. The cooks fled, and told what had happened to the abbot, who ran to the spot, and, when he saw the old wretch, shouted out, "In the name of St. Peter, fly—fly! It is certainly a devil!" The admonition of the father abbot was not thrown away: the kitchen was quickly cleared; and Eustace, having released the pork from his charm, carried it off to the tavern of a neighbouring innkeeper, an old friend and pot-companion of his own, with whom he spent the whole night in eating, drinking, and gambling,—playing away every thing—even to the pawning of his crucifixes, images, and monk's books.

We now approach that period of Eustace's life when began his quarrel with the count of Boulogne, in consequence of which he became an outlaw—a true Robin Hood, and performed in that character pranks the simple relation of which would fill a volume. The origin of his disagreement with the count was as follows.

Eustace, it appears, was born at a place called Courset. His father Bauduins Buskés, was a peer of the Boulonois, well skilled in law, and an experienced pleader. He had pleaded a cause in the court against Hainfrois of Heresinguehans, the object of which was to deprive that nobleman of a certain manor; and, in consequence of some disagreement between them, he had given Hainfrois a blow, which was revenged by the murder of Bauduins, near Bassinghen. Eustace, who was now a monk, when he heard of the death of his father, went to the court to demand justice against Hainfrois, whom he charged with being the instigator of the murder. The charge was denied, and the cause was adjudged to be decided by battle. The pledges and the hostages were given; and Hainfrois, having sworn that he was upwards of sixty years of age, and his statement being confirmed on the oath of twenty-nine of his peers, it was allowed that one of his relations, or retainers, might fight for him. Accordingly, one of his vassals, Eustace of Maraquise, accepted the challenge—a large, bold, strong, and handsome man. On the other part, the challenge was accepted by Manesiers, a nephew of Bauduins Busqués, a large bachelor, handsome, and strong, who charged Hainfrois with the death of his uncle. The battle, which was fought at Etaples, was fiercely contested, and ended by the death of Manesiers.

Meanwhile, Eustace had been to the count of Boulogne,

had renounced all intention of standing by the event of the combat, and had declared that he would agree to no reconciliation until he had revenged the death of his father. The monk, however, was allowed to take the rank to which the death of his father entitled him: he was a seneschal of the Boulonois, a peer, and had all the share in the government, which, as such, belonged to him. But Hainfrois never ceased to slander him to the duke, till the latter called Eustace before him, and demanded of him why he had retained the dignities which he held. "I am here," was the reply, "ready to give an account of every thing, when you have summoned me to answer the charge before your peers and your barons: I am one of the peers of the Boulonois." "You shall come to Hardelot," said the count, "to answer to the charge there, where you dare not make a false statement." "It is treason," cried Eustace: "you wish to throw me in prison;" and he instantly left the place. The count confiscated his property, and burnt his garden, for which Eustace swore that he would take an ample revenge.

One day, soon after this, Eustace the Monk came to two mills which the count had erected near Boulogne. He found in one of them a miller, whom he compelled to go immediately to the festival which was that day held to celebrate the nuptials of Simon de Boulogne. "Tell them," he said, "that Eustace the Monk is come to give them some light, that they may not eat in the dark. I'll set fire to the mills, and give them a couple of bright candles." When the miller had delivered his message, the count jumped from his seat, the alarm-bell was rung, and both mayor and provost prepared to follow the outlaw; but the mills were burnt, and Eustace escaped. Thus commenced

the hostilities of Eustace the Monk against his enemy, the count of Boulogne.

Eustace was at Clairmarais, and learned there that the count was on his way to St. Omers. He dressed himself in the garb of a monk, took with him two monks of the abbey, and, all three being mounted, rode forth till they met the count between two valleys. The count descended at one of his houses; and, after salutation on each side, Eustace rode up to him, and said, "Sire, for the mercy of God, we pray you to lay aside your anger against Eustace the Monk."

"Say no more," replied the count: "let me but get hold of him, and I'll skin him alive. The scoundrel, in the disguise of a pilgrim, came and burnt two of my mills; and now he makes open war upon me. I'll watch him well; and, if I catch him, he shall die a foul death: he shall be hanged, burnt, or drowned."

Eustace answered: "By my robe! there would then be peace. But Eustace is a monk, and you are count of Boulogne: it is, therefore, fit that you should show mercy to him. I pray you, sire, that you lay aside your anger, and he shall be your liege. Sire, be reconciled to him—mercy on the sinner."

"Hold thy tongue," said the count, "and let me hear no more. Get thee gone; I care not for thy preaching. For the love of Eustace the Monk, I will put no trust in any of thine order. By the bowels of St. Marie! I believe that this monk is watching me now: there is not such a villanous scoundrel in the world. I fear greatly that he will enchant me. Dan Monk, what name bearest thou?"

"They call me brother Simon: I am cellarer of Clairmarais. Eustace, with twenty-nine others, all armed in

iron, came to the abbey yesterday, and prayed the father abbot to seek a reconciliation with you."

"Let not your abbot be so bold," answered the count, "as to give harbour to this fellow, or I will come and cut him to pieces. I'll shave him, both head and neck. Where wast thou born, dan Monk?"

"Sire, at Lens, where I lived twenty years."

"By my faith," said the count of Boulogne, "thou resemblest much Eustace himself, in figure, in body, in look, and in stature: thou hast his eyes, his mouth, and his nose. But thou hast a broad crown, red shoes, a white gown, and a discoloured face, I would keep you all three as pledges, were it not purely for the love of God. Turn away, and get thee gone!"

The two monks had witnessed the interview with fear and trepidation. While Eustace was still present, the count made all the peers of the Boulonois swear three times, that they would not on any consideration fail to deliver up to him his enemy. A sergeant suddenly came forward, and said, "Sire, why do you delay? Eustace sits by your side: seize him, and make him discover himself. I tell you truly it is he."

"I understand the scoundrel," said William of Montquarrel: "Dan Simon, the cellarer, is the man. I knew him as well as I know a penny."

"No," said Hugh of Gaune, "Eustace is not half so green."

"Moreover," said Hugh of Belin, "this fellow was born at Lens, near Hennin."

"By my faith," said Aufrans of Caen, "Eustace is neither green nor blue."

"No," said Gualo de la Capide; "he is all red in the chops."

The two monks trembled; but Eustace coolly replied to all these remarks, "People resemble each other." He then took his leave of the count, and joined his two companions. When the count and his party had entered the house, Eustace went to the stable, ordered a sergeant who was there to saddle the count's best horse, whose name was Moriel, mounted it, and rode off at full speed, telling the sergeant that he was Eustace the Monk. "Hallo, hallo! Saint Mary!" cried the sergeant; and the count and his retainers rushed out to see what was the matter. "A scoundrel of a monk has ridden away mounted upon Moriel," said the sergeant.

"See!" said the count; "by the neck! by the bowels! by —— but hasten to the rescue!"

"No," said the sergeant who had before advised the count to seize him; "he will never be taken while he is seated upon Moriel; for Moriel flies like the wind, and he is now spurred on by the devil himself. I know it well."

"Fool that I was!" said the count, "why did I not secure him while he was sitting beside me?"

The count, however, ordered his company to mount; and the whole party, knights and sergeants, galloped off to the forest in search of the depredator. But Eustace had gone to a small hamlet, where he put Moriel in a place of safety and secrecy; and then changed his habit, putting a linen cap on his head, and carrying a club on his shoulder. In this disguise he took charge of a flock of sheep that were feeding on a heath over which he expected that the count would pass. Presently the count appeared.

"Varlet," said he, "which way went a white monk on a black horse?"

"Sire, he went all along yon vale, on a horse as black as a berry."

The count speedily followed the route pointed out by the shepherd, and soon overtook, not Eustace, but the two monks who had been his companions. After the count and his attendants had passed by, Eustace left his sheep, and returned into the forest.

While Eustace was thus wandering in the forest, he espied the baggage of the count, conducted by a boy on horseback. Eustace seized the lad, cut off his tongue, and then sent him after his master; who, when he saw this example of Eustace's cruelty, and learned that he had plundered his baggage, returned hastily by the way he had come, and hunted the outlaw vigorously through the forest of Hardelot.

Here Eustace narrowly escaped falling a prey to the treachery of one of his own retainers. He had two lads, whom he had brought up from their youth, and who now served him as spies, keeping watch in different parts of the wood, both by day and by night. One of these spies came to the count, and offered to discover to him the hiding-place of his master. The count promised to make the betrayer a page of his court, if by his means he should succeed in apprehending the outlaw. "Sire," said the lad, "he is sitting at his dinner: follow me quickly, and you shall have him."

"Proceed," replied the count, "and I will follow at a little distance."

But the other spy had discovered the treachery of his companion, and had apprized Eustace of the plot which was formed against him. Eustace hung his faithless servant on a tree, before the count arrived to rescue him, and then, mounting Moriel, soon left his enemies far behind him. But, though Eustace himself escaped, the count

overtook two of his sergeants, and, by way of retaliation, put out their eyes. Eustace swore by the Holy Virgin that he would have the feet of four of the count's men, in revenge for the four eyes which the count had taken. And, in fact, while Eustace was watching the high road, he discovered five of the count's sergeants, who were leading prisoners the two monks of Clairmarais. He liberated the monks, cut off the feet of four of the sergeants, and sent the fifth to carry the tidings to the count, who, in his rage, swore by the belly and bowels, and sent immediately twenty knights to scour the woods in search of him.

While the twenty knights were one day searching for him in the forest, Eustace dressed himself in the garb of a peasant, with a coarse smock thrown over him, and came to them with a mournful visage. "God save you, my masters!" said he; and they returned the salutation civilly, asking, "Whence comest thou, and whither art thou going?" "My lords," said he, "I seek the count of Boulogne, to complain of a rascally monk who has robbed me in his territory. He said that he was at war with the count, and he has taken from me what was worth a hundred marks. Tell me, my lords, without delay, where shall I find the count?" One of them replied, "At Hardelot: go thither, by all means." Eustace went to Hardelot, entered the hall where the count was at dinner, and said, "May God be here, that he may revenge me on the devil! My lords, which is the count of Boulogne?" "There he is," said a sergeant. Eustace approached him. "Sire," said he, "mercy! I am a citizen of Andeli: I come from Bruges, in Flanders; and I brought with me shoes of say, and thirty pounds in money. A mad, hairbrained fellow, cropped on the crown like a priest, who appeared to be a

monk, said he was one of your enemies, and he has taken from me everything I had, even my horse and my robe. I come to lay my case before you, and to ask for justice. He is not far from this place. The scoundrel of a monk dressed me in this smock, and then sent me to you. I know that he is near, for I saw him enter some thick bushes." — "What kind of a man is he?" said the count; "black or white, great or small?" "He is about my own size," said Eustace. The count arose from the table, armed six of his retainers, and rode with Eustace into the forest; who led him to a place where twenty-nine of his own men lay in ambush, and there demanded of him peace and pardon. The count refused his request; and was allowed to depart, since, as Eustace said, he had come thither under his protection.

Many a trick did Eustace play upon his enemies. One day, as the count, with nine attendants, was riding to Hardelot, Eustace, with ten companions, followed him in the garb of pilgrims. When the count descended from his horse, Eustace came to him, and said, "Sire, we are penitents from the apostle of Rome: many injuries we have done to men, of which, by God's grace, we have repented. We are now in great need." The count gave him threepence, and entered the castle with his followers, leaving the ten horses without. Eustace took them all, set fire to the town, and fled, leaving a sergeant to tell the count that this had been all done by the penitent on whom he had bestowed his threepence. "By my faith!" said the count, "I was a fool not to seize these rascals! these vagabonds! these false pilgrims! If I desired to leave the castle, I have not a horse to mount. This monk is truly a devil. If I had him, he should rue it, I warrant me." Eustace

met with a merchant, sent him with one of the horses to the count, telling him that it was the tithe of his gains.

Another time, a spy informed the count that Eustace was in the forest. The count assembled his men, followed the spy on foot, and lay in ambush in a ditch. One of Eustace's spies, however, had seen them, and carried immediate information of their movements to his master. Eustace went to a collier, who was carrying charcoal on an ass, blackened his face and neck and hands with the charcoal, and put on the collier's frock and cap, for which he gave him his own robe. Thus equipped, he set out for Boulogne with his ass and burden. When he came to the spot where the count lay in wait, Eustace cried out to him. "My lord, what are you doing there?" "What concern is it of yours, sir villan?" was the reply. "By St. Omer!" said Eustace, "I will go and tell the count how the men of Eustace the Monk are always injuring and insulting us. I dare not bring out my beast to carry my charcoal to sell, but Eustace must rob me of it. Meanwhile he is sitting at his ease by a good fire, devouring meat and venison; for he has burnt all my charcoal, which has cost me so much labour in its preparation." "Is he near this place?" asked the count. "Close by. Go straight along this path, and you will find him." Eustace goaded his beast onwards, and the count entered the forest, where he found the collier dressed in the garments of the monk. The count's men beat and insulted the collier much; for they thought, sure enough, it was Eustace they had caught at last, till he cried out, "Mercy, my lords, mercy! why do you beat me? You may take my coat, if you will, for it is all the property I have. It is the robe of Eustace the Monk, who has gone with my

ass and charcoal towards Boulogne, his hands, face, and neck blackened, and my cap on his head. He took my frock, and left me his robe of silk." The count, in a rage, hurried back in pursuit of Eustace, who, in the meanwhile, had washed his face, and, meeting with a potter, had exchanged his ass and charcoal for pots and jugs, and his collier's garments for those of the potter. Eustace was marching along, and crying lustily, "Pots, pots!" when the count and his men suddenly issued from a thicket, and asked him if he had seen a collier riding along that way. "Sire," said Eustace, "he is gone straight to Boulogne, with an ass laden with charcoal." The count and his party put spurs to their horses, and overtook the collier, whom they immediately began to beat and insult; and, tying his feet and hands, they put him upon a horse with his face towards the tail. The man began to roar and shout. "My lords," he said, "I pray you, for God's sake, have mercy upon me! Why have you taken me? If I have done wrong, I am willing to make amends." "Aha, aha! you vagabond!" said the count: "you think to escape again. In due time I'll have you hanged, safely enough." A knight, however, who had often seen the potter, and chanced now to look at him, said, "What devil has made thee a collier? Thou wast formerly a potter. No man can ever thrive who has so many trades." The potter then told how he had exchanged his ware with a collier, bad luck to him! and how the latter went towards the wood, crying, "Pots, pots!" "Hallo!" cried the count; "quick to the wood: hunt it well, and bring me every one you find there." And so they liberated the collier, and again entered the forest.

Eustace, in the meantime, had thrown his pots into a

marsh, and had concealed himself in the nest of a kite, where he mimicked the voice of a nightingale.* As soon as he first saw the count passing, he cried, "Ochi! ochi! ochi! ochi!" (*i. e.* kill! kill! kill! kill!) "I will kill him," said the count, "by St. Richier, if I lay hands upon him." "Fier! fier!" (strike! strike!) cried Eustace the Monk. "By my faith, I will," said the count: "I'll strike him so that he shall never molest me again." Eustace waited a few moments, and then cried, "Non l'ot! si ot! non l'ot! si ot!" (he has it not! he has! he has it not! he has!) "Yea, by my faith, he has," said the count of Boulogne: "he has taken all my good horses." "Hui! hui!" (to-day! to-day!) cried Eustace again. "You say right," said the count; "to-day it shall be; I will kill him with my own hands if I meet with him. He is no fool, I see, who listens to the counsel of a nightingale; for this nightingale has taught me how to take vengeance upon mine enemy. He says well that I must strike him and kill him."

Then the count hunted sedulously after Eustace. First were caught four monks, who were immediately thrown into prison. After them were sent to prison four pedlars and a pig; next three men who carried fowls to sell, and two men who drove asses; then six fishermen and their fishes; and after them four clerks and an archpriest: so that by the end of the day there had been taken more than forty persons, who were all brought for examination before the count. Meanwhile Eustace entered the town in the disguise of a woman, stole two of the count's horses, and threw the sergeant, who had the care of them into a bog.

* It will be observed that the French words used by Eustace resemble very closely the notes of a nightingale.

On another occasion, when the count of Boulogne, with Philip king of France, and the prince royal, and all his host, were passing towards Gerros, the king with a fair company rested during the night at La Capiele, and near him was assembled his host at Sainte-Marie-au-Bois. Eustace, who haunted the neighbourhood with his men, first plundered and stripped a burgess of Corbye, and afterwards slew one of the king's knights. The king complained bitterly to the count, who recounted to him how he had been constantly foiled in his attempts to take this offender. The king went from La Capiele to Sangatte; and on his return the rearguard of his host was formed by the count and his men. While the count was at his post, information was brought to him that Eustace lay in a small town near the road on which they were journeying. The count hastened to the place; but Eustace, having been informed of his danger, went out of the town, and changed clothes with a countryman who was making a hedge. Shortly after this, the count issued from an adjoining valley, and came to Eustace, who was working at the hedge. "Villan," said he, "is Eustace the monk in this town?" "No," he replied; "he has just fled in the direction between you and the king's army. Follow quickly, and you will overtake him." The count pursued in the direction pointed out to him; and Eustace, whose men were concealed in the neighbourhood, carried off five knights, six palfreys, and five war-horses, from the rear of his troop. The knights he took to dine with him in the forest; and, to his surprise, he discovered that one of them was Hainfrois, his mortal enemy. Hainfrois, of course, expected no mercy; but after dinner Eustace sent

him back to the count, to tell him who was the labourer that he had seen making the hedge.

The count immediately returned, and Eustace had recourse to another stratagem. He equipped himself as a leper, with cup, crutch, and clapper; and, when the count passed, he began to rattle his clapper, by which he gained in charity from the count and his knights twenty-eight pence. At a short distance in the rear, a boy was leading one of the count's finest horses. Eustace knocked him down, mounted the saddle, and galloped away, leaving the lad to tell it to the count, who, almost mad with rage, turned again to pursue him.

Eustace adopted a new disguise. He presented himself as a cripple, having tied up his leg, and bound about his thigh a piece of cow's liver, with a band all stained with blood; and in this plight he hobbled along, supported by a stake. The count, with all his retinue, knights and sergeants, were in a minster, and the prior was chanting the mass when Eustace entered, told the count his disease, and prayed his charity. The count gave him twelvepence. Then he went to the prior where he was receiving the offering, and showing him his leg, "See, sir," said he, "in what a lamentable condition I am: my thigh is all rotten. Now, for the sake of God and St. Mary, pray these knights to give me some of their pence that I may get it healed." "Willingly," said the prior; "but wait till the offering is ended." The prior was as good as his word; and Eustace gained eight shillings by the stratagem. Then he left the minster, mounted the horse of the count, and dashed away, with his stake hanging by the side of his leg. The boys shouted lustily, "Halloo! the cripple

has stolen a horse! see how he spurs along the valley!" And every knight and sergeant rushed from the minster; but the thief had gained too much the start to allow of any hope that he might be overtaken.

Once, when he had been tracked over the snow by the count, and escaped by the stratagem of having his horse shoed backwards, the count discovered the trick from the smith who had shoed his horse, and pursued towards a monastery, where Eustace had taken shelter, and where he was then dining. It happened that three carpenters were at work on some new buildings. As the count passed by, one of his sergeants rode up to the monastery, and Eustace, who had taken the disguise of a carpenter, came out to meet him. "Bless you, sir!" said Eustace: "what men are these who are passing by?" "They are outlaws," said the squire, "who have been exiled from their country. They come into this land to seek a man who is famous for his warlike skill. They have heard of the monk who was born near Boulogne, that he is a worthy man, courageous and hardy." "Pish, friend!" said Eustace the Monk, "you go on a business that is not worth a button. He is a lazy blackguard and a glutton. The scoundrel is at his dinner in the monastery. Bad luck to him! he has nearly famished us all. Go in, and you will find him." The sergeant dismounted: "Hold my steed," said he to Eustace; there is not his equal between here and Monchi. Take care of yourself, for he is a very devil at kicking." "I'll hold him safe," replied Eustace, "he shall not kick me, if I can help it." The sergeant entered the monastery, and it is hardly necessary to say that he found there no monk. Eustace, in the meantime, was not idle. He mounted the horse, shouted out, "Carpenters, take your axe—I'm off.

Heaven preserve you!" and galloped away. "By cock's teeth! thou hadst better dismount," cried the sergeant, as he emerged from the monastery; "bring back the horse, I say." "It is too good to be given up so easily," was the reply of the monk, as he scampered off; "you may go back on foot, master vassal. Give my respects to the count, and tell him that, had he dismounted here, he would have met with a good entertainment." Eustace disappeared in the forest; and the sergeant was obliged to make his way to the count on foot, before whom he came half dead with hunger and thirst, his garments torn by the brambles, and covered with mud and dirt, which they had gathered out of the ditches and holes into which he had fallen.

The count enraged more than ever, began a brisk hunt in the forest, and came upon him suddenly; so that Eustace, having scarcely time to mount his horse Moriel, in his hurry to escape, was thrown from the saddle, and thus, after a desperate struggle, fell into the hands of his enemies. The count would have hanged him immediately; but his peers were unanimously of opinion that he should be sent to receive judgment of the king of France. The count consented; and he was escorted in a cart bound hand and foot; but, near Beaurains, thirty of his men fell upon the escort, and succeeded in rescuing their master. Eustace, after this narrow escape, passed the river of Cance, and robbed the abbot of Jumiaus of thirty marks in money.

When the count was one day at Boulogne, soon after Eustace's escape, the latter came there in the disguise of a mackerel-vender. The sergeants of the count bought his mackerel, and his dinner was given him at the court; but when he demanded payment, he was told to wait till another day. Eustace watched an opportunity when the

count had ordered his horses to be saddled for riding, went with three lads to take four of the handsomest to water, led them to a place where his own men were in ambush, and carried them off; sending word by one of the count's retainers, whom he met, that Eustace had taken the payment of his mackerel. The count again pursued the depredator, but in vain.

About this time Eustace seems to have formed the design of leaving the forests of the Boulonois, and of repairing to England, to offer his services to king John. One of his last tricks upon the count was performed while the latter was at Calais. Eustace conveyed to him a present of tarts and other pastry, in which, in place of fruit, he had put a mixture of tow, pitch, and wax, by which, when they were all at dinner, the count's party were miserably entrapped. Eustace, on his arrival before king John, offered to deliver up his daughter or his wife, as hostages for his loyalty: the king received him gladly, and gave him thirty galleys, with which he conquered and plundered the isles of Jersey and Guernsey. Thence he sailed to the coast of France, where he played a new trick upon Cadoc, the seneschal of Normandy, who sought to take him, and deliver him to the French king. On his return he took and plundered several ships; and, at his own request, king John granted to him land in England and also gave him permission, and lent him money, to build a palace in London, which he finished in a most splendid manner. His land, as we learn from the Close Rolls, was at Swaffham in Norfolk.*

* The document contained in the Close Rolls, referring to this land, runs thus,—: Mandatum est vicecomiti Norfolciæ quod faciat habere, Willelmo de Cuntes terram quæ fuit Eustachio Monacho in Swafham,

After Eustace had been a while in England, he seems to have lost the confidence of the king; and at the same time friendship was established between the count of Boulogne, his old enemy, and John, in consequence of which the former paid a visit in person to the English court. Eustace saw immediately the necessity of leaving England, and he was obliged to use a stratagem to effect his escape,—for the king had issued orders for his arrest, and had directed the seas to be strictly watched. The monk took a bow and a fiddle, and dressed himself as a minstrel. In this garb he arrived at the coast, where he found a merchant ready to sail, and entered the ship with him. The steersman looked upon him as an intruder. "Thou shalt go out," said he, "with God's help." "That I will," replied Eustace, "when we are on the other side. But I think you are not over wise. Look! I will give you for my passage five sterlings and my fiddle. I am a jongler and a minstrel, and you will not easily find my equal. I know all kinds of songs. For St. Mary's sake! good sir, carry me over! I come now from Northumberland, and have been five years in Ireland. I have drunk so much 'good ale,' that my

quæ est de honore Britanniæ, quam dominus rex ei concessit. Teste me ipso, apud Lincolniam, xxiii. die Februarii." (A. D. 1216.) Another of the Close Rolls, four years earlier, mentions money which Eustace owed to the king:—"Rex vicecomiti Norfolciæ, etc. Scias quod dedimus respectum Eustachio Monacho de xx^{ti} marcas quas nobis debet usque ad festum sancti Andreæ, et ideo tibi mandamus quod demandam quam ei inde facis ponas in respectum usque ad prædictum festum; duas autem marcatas terræ unde idem Eustachius saisitus fuit in balliva tua et quam cepisti in manum nostram ipsum in pace habere permittas quamdiu fuerit ad præsens in servitio nostro, et quamdiu nobis placuerit. T. G. filio Petri, apud Westmonasterium xiii. die Octobris, per eundem coram baronibus de scaccario" (A. D. 1212.)

face is all discoloured, and pale; and I now hasten to drink again the wines of Argenteuil and Prouvins." "Tell us thy name." "Sir, my name is Mauferas, and I am an Englishman I wot!" "Thou an Englishman?" replied the steersman, "I thought thou hadst been a Frenchman. At all events, if thou knowest any song, friend, let us have it." "Know I one? Yea! of Agoullant and Aimon, or of Blanchandin, or of Florence of Rome: there is not a song in the whole world but I know it. I should be delighted, without doubt, to afford you amusement; but, in truth, the sea frightens me so much at present, that I could not sing a song worth hearing." The steersman was satisfied, and questioned no further the skill of his passenger, who arrived in the evening at Boulogne.

It appears that king John had put to death the daughter of Eustace, who had been delivered up as a hostage for the good conduct of her father. Eustace vowed vengeance against John, and came to the resolution of offering his services to the king of France; but being somewhat doubtful of the reception which he might meet at the French court, he took the disguise of a courier, and carried to the king a letter, purporting to come from the monk, announcing his arrival in the French territory, and offering to him his services. The king promised that if Eustace would consent to a personal interview with him he should have a safe conduct; upon which, encouraged by the king's reply, Eustace answered,—"I am he:" and, after extorting oaths of loyalty, the king received him into favour. Eustace was again put in command of a fleet, with which he infested the seas, committing terrible depredations upon the party whom he had before served. Hence our chronicles have designated him by the name of *traitor*. In one of his naval engagements, when he was bringing over a French fleet to

assist the barons who were warring against John, and their French auxiliaries, after a desperate engagement, he was defeated and slain.

The most curious account of the last end of Eustace the Monk is found in an unpublished chronicle, preserved among the manuscripts of the British Museum. It is another testimony of the character which he possessed at that time for his supposed skill in magic, and for his use of supernatural agents. It required the presence of a saint to work his overthrow.

On the day of St. Bartholomew the apostle, this document tells us, there came with a great fleet towards Sandwich, Eustace the Monk, accompanied by several great lords of France, who expected to make an entire conquest of the kingdom, trusting more in the malice of this apostate monk than in their own strength, because he was deeply skilled in magic. And they had such confidence in his promises, on account of the prodigies which he had performed in their country, that they had brought with them their wives and children, and even infants in the cradle, to inhabit England immediately. Now, when these ships approached the harbour of Sandwich, they were all perfectly visible, except that of Eustace, who had made a conjuration, so that himself and his ship could be seen by none; and where his ship floated there appeared nothing but the waves of the sea. The people of the town were terribly frightened at the unexpected arrival of so great an army. Having no power sufficient to make any resistance against their enemies, they put all their hope in God; and, throwing themselves on their knees, and weeping bitterly, they prayed, for the love of St. Bartholomew, whose festival it was, that he would have pity on them, and deliver their land from the hands of the invader. They made a

vow, also, that if God would give them victory, they would raise a chapel in honour of St. Bartholomew himself, and that they would found in it a chantry for ever. There was at that time in the town a man called Stephen Crabbe, who had formerly been very intimate with the monk Eustace, and whom Eustace had loved so well, that he had taught him many of his practices in magic. This Crabbe happening to be present when those of the town who bore arms were consulting what was best to be done, and moved by the lamentations of the unarmed people, he addressed the chief men of the town:—"Unless," said he, "Heaven have mercy upon us, the port of Sandwich, hitherto so renowned, will be invaded, and the land lost. But, in order that our posterity may not have reason to reproach us, that such a dishonour has arrived to the kingdom through our town, I will willingly give my life to save the honour of my country. For this Eustace, who is the leader of our enemies, cannot be seen by one who is ignorant of magic, and I have learnt from himself this enchantment. I will give to day, then, my life for the sake of this land,—for I know well that, in entering his ship, I cannot escape death from the numerous soldiers who are with him." After having thus spoken, Stephen Crabbe entered one of the only three vessels which were there to defend the place against this powerful armament, and when they approached Eustace's ship he leaped from his own into it. The English, to whom the ship was invisible, when they saw him standing and fighting, as they thought, on the water, shouted, and thought that he had been mad, or that some evil spirit had taken his form. Then Stephen cut off the head of Eustace, and in an instant his ship was visible to everybody. But Stephen

himself was immediately slain, horribly mutilated, and thrown, piecemeal, into the sea. Suddenly there arose a hurricane, which in many places overthrew houses, and tore large trees up by the roots. It entered the haven, and in that instant overset all the enemy's ships, without injuring one of those which were stationed to defend the town, except that it cast a terrible fear into those who were embarked in them. The English said, that in the air there appeared a man in red garments; that they instantly fell upon their knees, and cried,—"Saint Bartholomew, have pity on us, and succour us against our foes;" and that they heard a voice which pronounced these words,—"I am Bartholomew, and I am sent to assist you: fear nothing." At these words he disappeared, and was neither seen nor heard more.

Thus ended the career of one of the most extraordinary outlaws who ever lived. "He who puts his trust in evil practices," observes the chronicle we have just quoted, "if he would know what they are worth, let him think upon the example of this great magician."

After the battle, the chronicle adds, the people of Sandwich bought, at the common expense, a place not far from the town, where they built a chapel, and dedicated it to St. Bartholomew. They erected houses contiguous for the support of aged people, of both sexes, who should be in poverty; and they bought lands and rents to support the poor in the hospital, and to keep a chantry in the chapel, for ever. It was also established as a custom, that every year, on St. Bartholomew's day, the commons should assemble in the town of Sandwich, and that they should march in solemn procession to the hospital, each with a wax taper in his hand.

ESSAY XVI.

THE HISTORY OF FULKE FITZ WARINE.

AT the same time that Eustace the monk was astonishing the good people of the Boulonnais by his exploits, the forests of merry England were also haunted by numerous outlaws, who were driven from their homes by the tyranny of king John. Among these, one of the most remarkable, and the only one the history of whose exploits has come down to us, was Fulke fitz Warine, the heir of a noble family on the borders of Wales, lord of Whitington and of many other broad domains. Fulke's father had enjoyed the especial favour of Henry II, and the son had been educated in the society of the royal children, Richard and John. Richard, when king, made young Fulke guardian of the marches; but king John, in revenge (it was said), for an old quarrel which had occurred in their boyish games, not only deprived him of his office, but wrested also from him his estate of Whitington, on the border, which he gave to Fulke's enemy, Morys fitz Roger of Powis. When Fulk heard of the alliance between the king and Morys fitz Roger, he repaired with his four brothers to the court, which was then at Winchester, and, obtaining no redress, they publicly threw up their allegiance to the king, and, with their cousin and staunch

friend, Baldwin de Hodnet, left the city. They had scarcely gone a mile, when they were overtaken by fifteen knights, who had been sent by the king to secure their persons, but these, after a desperate combat, were defeated, and many of them slain. King John immediately proclaimed Fulke an outlaw, and seized all his estates.

Fulke went straight to his manor of Alderbury, told his mother what had happened, and, taking with him as much of his riches as could be carried away, he repaired to Britany, accompanied with his brothers, and remained there some time. At length he became anxious to revisit his native country, and the five brethren, with their cousins Audulf de Bracy and Baldwin de Hodnet, secretly landed in England, and, concealing themselves by day "in the woods and moors," and travelling by night, they reached Alderbury, where Fulke learnt that his mother was dead. He then collected as many of his friends and retainers as would join their fortunes with his, and repaired to the forest called "Babbyng," beside Whitington, to espy the movements of his chief enemy, Morys fitz Roger. The latter received intelligence of his arrival by one of his valets, who had seen him in the forest, and he went forth to seek him, clad in superb armour, and accompanied by thirty knights and some five hundred men on foot. But Fulke fell suddenly upon them, and drove them back into the castle, an arrow from which wounded him in the leg. Morys, who was himself wounded in the shoulder, sent word immediately to the king that Fulke fitz Warine was returned to England; and John appointed a hundred knights to hunt after Fulke throughout the island. Many of these, however, appear to have borne good-will to him (for he was related by blood to some of the best families

in the kingdom), and others were afraid of him, so that, as the writer of his history insinuates, when Fulke was in one part of the kingdom, the knights generally contrived to be in another.

Mortified that his enemy Morys had escaped him, Fulke repaired to the forest of 'Bradene,' where he lay some time concealed. One day there came by the forest ten merchants, with a rich cargo of cloths, furs, spices, &c., guarded by fourteen sergeants-at-arms. When Fulke saw them he sent his brother John to inquire what people they were, and whence they came. One of them answered him rudely; but John fitz Warine still spoke courteously, and requested they would come and speak with his lord in the wood. The only answer he received was a blow from one of the sergeants; on which Fulke and his men rushed forth, and, after a courageous resistance, captured the whole convoy, and carried them into the depths of the forest. There Fulke asked again who they were, and learnt that the merchandise belonged to the king. When he heard this, he had the rich cloths and furs measured out with his lance, and gave all his companions, little and great, a share of them, each according to his rank; "but every one had large measure enough." The rest of the merchandise and wealth was also fairly divided; and towards evening, after having been feasted, the merchants and sergeants, all wounded and lame, were "sent to carry Fulke's salutations to the king, and thank him for his good robes." He was nearly mad with rage; and immediately ordered it to be proclaimed, that whoever would bring him Fulke fitz Warine, alive or dead, should be rewarded with a thousand pounds of silver, and all Fulke's lands in England. The writer who has preserved these

details, here takes the opportunity to state, that during the whole period of his exile and outlawry, Fulke never robbed or injured anybody but the king or his agents.

Fulke now changed his hiding-place, and went into the forest of Kent, and left his knights in the thick of the forest, and went riding all alone on the high road. There he met a gay messenger, singing as he rode along, with a chaplet of red roses on his head. Fulke asked him to give him the chaplet for a token of love, and told him that if he had need of him he would repay it double. "Sir," said the messenger, "he is very sparing of his goods who will not give a chaplet of roses at the request of a knight." And he gave him the chaplet, for which courtesy Fulke paid him twenty sols. But the messenger knew well who he was, and he hastened to Canterbury, and there met the hundred knights who were employed to hunt after the outlaws, and, in consideration of a good reward, told them where Fulke and his companions were concealed in a little wood. The knights raised the country, and caused the wood to be surrounded as though they were hunting game, and placed old people and others in the fields with horns, to give notice if they saw Fulke and his companions issue from the forest. Fulke knew nothing of these formidable transactions; and his suspicions were first roused by hearing a knight sound a great bugle. The outlaws immediately armed and issued forth. Meeting first with the body of knights, they attacked them, killed several at the first charge, and fought their way right through them. Then, wheeling suddenly about, they again attacked the knights, but others coming up to their assistance, fearing to be overpowered by numbers, and John fitz Warine being seriously wounded, they soon took to flight, leaving many

of their enemies dead on the place. When they had distanced their pursuers, the outlaws quitted their jaded horses, and fled on foot to an abbey that was near at hand. The porter, seeing them approach, ran to shut the gates upon them, but Fulke's brother Alayne, who was tall, jumped over the wall, wrested the keys from the porter, and let his companions enter. Fulke put on the dress of an old monk, and took a great staff in his hand, and closing the gate behind him, went along the road limping with one foot, and supporting his whole body on the great staff. Soon there came knights and sergeants, and a multitude of people. A knight said, "Old monk, have you seen any armed knights pass this way?" "Yes, sir, and may God repay them the hurt they have done me!" "And what have they done?" said the knight. "Sir," said Fulke, "I am old, as you see, and unable to help myself, I am so weak! And lo! seven came on horse, and about fifteen on foot, and, because I could not get readily out of their way, they made no stay, but run over me, and it is a chance I was not killed." "Say no more," said the knight, "you shall have your revenge before evening." The knights and their companions passed on, and were soon a league or more beyond the abbey.

Fulke remained a while to see what would happen. He had not been there long, when sir Gyrard de Malfée and ten knights well mounted, who had come from beyond sea, passed along the same road, leading some choice horses. Then says Gyrard in derision, "Here is a great fat monk; I'll warrant his belly would hold two gallons!" Fulke, without uttering a word, raised his staff, and struck the knight to the ground; and his companions, who were watching from the abbey gate, hurried to his assistance,

took and bound sir Gyrard and his knights, and locked them up in the porter's lodge, and, seizing their horses, set off at full gallop, and never stopped till they arrived at Huggeford, where Fulke's kinsman, sir Walter de Huggeford, gave them shelter. Here John fitz Warine was cured of his wound.

After Fulke had remained a few days at Huggeford, a messenger from Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, arrived, who had been long seeking him in different parts, and who informed him that the archbishop wished for an interview with him. The outlaws again went into Kent, and leaving his men in the same wood where they had formerly lodged, Fulke and his brother William, disguised as merchants, entered the city of Canterbury, and were received into the archbishop's palace. The archbishop told Fulke that his brother Theobald, who had married dame Maude de Caus, "a very rich lady, and the most beautiful in all England," was dead; that king John had attempted to get possession of the lady to satisfy his lust; that she had taken shelter with him, and that he had hid her in his palace. He concluded by urging Fulke to marry the lady. Fulke consented, the marriage was privately celebrated, and, after remaining there two days, he returned to his companions in the wood, and told them what he had done. The outlaws were merry together, and laughed and joked, and called him "hosebaunde," and asked him whither he should carry his fair lady, into his castle or into his forest?

It happened at this time that Fulke was much scandalized by the conduct of a wicked knight of the north country, named Peter de Bruvyle, who had collected together a number of dissolute people, and went about

murdering and robbing honest people, and he did this under the name of Fulke fitz Warine. One night he broke into the house of a knight named Robert fitz Sampson, who dwelt on the Scottish border, and who, with his lady, had often received Fulke fitz Warine in his wanderings, and treated him with hospitality. Fulke, who seldom ventured to remain long in one place, had repaired to the northern border, and was proceeding to the house of Robert fitz Sampson the very night it was visited by Peter de Bruvyle. As he approached, he saw a great light in the court, and heard boisterous shouts in the hall. Having placed his companions outside, he climbed over the fence and entered the court, and then he saw through the hall window the robbers seated at supper, with masks on, and Robert fitz Sampson and his good dame, and the members of their household, lay bound on one side of the hall. And the men at table addressed their leader by the name of sir Fulke, while the lady was piteously crying out to him, "Ha! sir Fulke, why do you treat us thus? I never injured you, but have always loved you to the best of my power." When Fulke heard the lady speak thus, he could restrain himself no longer, but drawing his sword and calling his companions, he burst suddenly into the hall. The robbers were struck dumb with terror at this unexpected visit; and Fulke obliged Peter de Bruvyle to bind his own men and cut off their heads, after which he beheaded Peter himself with his own hands. Fulke and his companions then unbound Robert fitz Sampson and his fellow sufferers, and they all supped merrily together.

Fulke had many narrow escapes from his enemies, but he was always ready with expedients. Sometimes the king traced the outlaws by the foot-marks of their horses;

and then Fulke had their shoes reversed, by which means the pursuers were thrown at once upon the wrong track. When Fulke took his leave of Robert fitz Sampson, he again visited his own paternal manor of Alderbury, and established himself in the forest on the banks of the river. He called to him one of his most faithful companions, John de Raunpaygne.—"John," said he, "you know much of minstrelsy and jonglerie; dare you go to Whitington and play before Morys fitz Roger, and see what he is about?" "Yea," said John; and he crushed a certain herb and put it in his mouth, and suddenly his face began to swell and became discoloured, so that his own companions scarcely knew him. He then dressed himself like a poor man, and took his box with his instrument, and a great staff in his hand, and came to Whitington, and told the porter he was a minstrel. The porter led him in to sir Morys, who asked him where he was born. "Sir," said he, "in the marches of Scotland." "And what news are there?" said sir Morys. "Sir, I know none, except of sir Fulke fitz Warine, who was slain the other night while committing a robbery in the house of sir Robert fitz Sampson." "Is that true you tell me?" "Yea, truly," said John de Raunpaygne; "all the people of the country say so." "Minstrel," said sir Morys, "for your good news I will give you this cup of fine silver." The minstrel took the cup, and thanked 'his good lord' heartily. He learnt that sir Morys was going with a small company to Shrewsbury the next day; but before he left the castle he fell into a quarrel with the 'ribalds' and slew one of them. The next morning Fulke, according to the information he had thus obtained, placed himself with his men on the way between Whitington and Shrewsbury. Morys soon

made his appearance, and recognized Fulke by his arms. "Now," said he, "I know that it is true that minstrels are liars." The outlaws slew Morys fitz Roger and all his knights, and, as the chronicler of these events pithily observes, "by so many the fewer enemies had Fulke."

Fulke and his companions now went to the court of the prince of Wales, and remained with him for some time, and aided him in his wars against king John, and by his means he obtained forcible possession of his own castle of Whitington. From thence for some time he carried on constant warfare with his enemies. In a battle with sir John Lestrange, two of Fulke's brothers, Alayn and Philip, were severely wounded, and his cousin, Audulf de Bracy, was taken prisoner and carried to Shrewsbury, and delivered to the king, who threatened to hang him. The skill of John de Raunpaygne was again called into action. He dressed himself very richly, "like a great count or baron," dyed his hair and his body as black as jet, so that nothing but his teeth was left white; hung a very fair tabour about his neck; mounted a handsome palfrey, and rode straight to the castle of Shrewsbury. When he came before the king he fell on his knees, and saluted him very courteously. King John returned the salutation, and asked him who he was. "Sire," said he, "I am an Ethiopian minstrel, born in Ethiopia." Said the king, "Are all the people of that country of your colour?" "Yea, my lord, both men and women." Then the king asked, "What say they in foreign countries of me?" "Sire," said he, "you are the most renowned king in all Christendom, and it is on account of your great renown that I am come to see you." "Fair sir," said the king, "you are welcome." "Sire, my lord, many thanks!"

replied John de Raunpaygne. After the king was gone to his bed, sir Henry de Audeley (the constable of the castle) sent for the black minstrel, and he was conducted to his chamber; and there they "made great melody;" and when sir Henry had drunk pretty deeply, he called a valet and said, "Go fetch sir Audulf de Bracy, whom the king will put to death to-morrow; he shall have one merry night before he dies." The valet soon brought sir Audulf into the chamber, and then they talked and joked together. John de Raunpaygne began a song which sir Audulf used to sing, on which sir Audulf lifted up his head, looked him in the face, and with some difficulty recognized him. When sir Henry asked to drink, John de Raunpaygne jumped on his feet and served the cup round, in doing which he cleverly threw into it a powder, which in a short time threw all who drank of it into a profound sleep. John de Raunpaygne then took one of the king's fools who was there, placed him between the two knights who had sir Audulf in guard, and making a rope of the table cloths and towels in the chamber, the two friends let themselves down from a window which looked over the river, and made the best of their way to Whitington, where they were joyfully received by Fulke and his companions.

Meanwhile the adventures of his young wife were not less varied than those of Fulke himself. During the first year of her marriage she remained in sanctuary at Canterbury, where she gave birth to a daughter. Her husband then took her away by night, and she was privately conveyed to Huggeford, at which place and at Alberbury she was concealed for some time. But king John, furious at her marriage with Fulke, and more eager to indulge his wicked inclinations, employed agents to spy her out and carry her

off, so that she could never stay long at one place. She was thus at length driven from Alderbury, and closely pursued to Shrewsbury, where, being in a condition unfit for travelling, she took shelter in St. Mary's church, and was there delivered of a second daughter. Her third child, a boy, which came into the world two months before its time, was born at the top of a Welsh mountain, and was baptized in a neighbouring stream.

Through the king's intrigues, Fulke was at length obliged to quit Wales, and he repaired to France, where, under a feigned name, he met with a hospitable reception, and distinguished himself by his skill and prowess in justs and tournaments. The king of France at last found who he was, and offered him lands in France if he would relinquish his own country; but Fulke replied that he was unworthy to receive lands of another, who could not defend his own at home, and he took his leave and repaired to the sea coast. There he saw a mariner, whose ship was waiting at anchor. "Fair sir," said Fulke, "is that ship yours?" "Yea, sir," he replied. "What is your name?" said Fulke. "Mador," was the reply. "Friend Mador," said Fulke, "art thou well acquainted with the sea?" "Truly, sir, there is not a land of which the fame has reached Christendom, to which I cannot guide safely a ship." "Truly," said Fulke, "yours is a dangerous profession. Tell me, Mador, fair friend, of what death did your father die?" Mador replied that he was drowned in the sea. "And your grandfather?" "The same." "And your great-grandfather?" "Truly, in the same manner; all my kin that I know to the fourth degree." "Truly," said Fulke, "you are fool-hardy to venture upon the sea again!" "Sir," said he, "why so? every crea-

ture will have the death to which he is destined. If you please, sir, answer my question; where died your father?" "In his bed," replied Fulke. "And your grandfather?" "In his bed, too; all my lineage, as far as I know, died in their beds." "Truly, sir, said Mador, "since all your lineage died in their beds, I wonder you ever dare venture into any bed." And Fulke saw, as the narrator tells us, that Mador said right, and that no one knows where he is destined to die, on land or on water.

With the assistance of Mador, Fulke fitted out and manned a good ship, with which for a full year he infested the English coast, robbing the king's navy, until after having passed the north of Scotland, he was carried away by a storm to the coasts of Spain and Africa. His adventures among dragons and Saracens during this period of his history partake so much of romance, that we will pass them over in silence, and return at once with our hero to England, whence he had been so long gone that king John seemed almost to have forgotten him. One day Fulke and his companions suddenly arrived at Dover, and, learning that the king was at Windsor, they left the ship in a place of safety, under the care of Mador, and, travelling as usually from place to place by night, they established themselves safely in a part of Windsor forest which was well known to them, and, hearing horns blow at a distance, Fulke placed his party in ambush, and went out "to spy adventures." As he went along he fell in with an old charcoal burner, all black with coal-dust, and bearing in his hand a three-forked prong. Fulke took this man's clothes and his charcoal, and gave him ten besants to go away and be silent. He then put on the sooty clothes, seated himself down by the fire, and pretended to be busily

occupied in stirring his coals this way and that way, when the king and three knights, all on foot, made their appearance. The intruders remained a few minutes laughing at the grotesque appearance of the supposed charcoal-burner; but at last the king said, "Master villan, have you seen any stag or doe pass this way?" Fulke, who had thrown down his prong, and fallen in a clownish manner on his knees, replied, "Yea, my lord, just now!" "What kind of one did you see?" said the king. "Sir, my lord, a stag, and he had long horns." "Where is it?" "Sir, my lord, I could undertake to lead you where I saw it." "Onwards, quick, master villan, and we will follow!' The king and his knights were armed with bows, and intended shooting the stag as it passed. But Fulke led him to the spot where his men were in ambush, and there, pretending he would go and drive out the game, he brought out his men, and surrounded the monarch and his knights. John trembled with fear, for he had great dread of Fulke fitz Warine, and knew well that he had no claim upon his mercy. He therefore readily consented to pardon him and restore him to his heritage, on condition that he should be allowed to return to his court without hurt, and he confirmed his promise by the oaths of himself and his three companions. But no sooner was the king out of danger, than he told his courtiers what had happened, broke his oath, and gave directions for pursuing the outlaws and bringing them before him, dead or alive. One of John's favorites, a foreign knight named sir James of Normandy, boastingly offered to lead the pursuit, telling the king that the English barons betrayed his interests for their consanguinity to the fitz Warines.

John de Raunpaygne had fortunately espied the approach

of sir James and his party, and given warning to the other outlaws, who saw that it was impossible to escape without fighting their assailants. They therefore set upon them vigorously, and slew them all except sir James himself. Then they dismounted from their horses, and took those of their pursuers, which were better and swifter, and clad themselves also in their gay armour; and Fulke fitz Warine changed armour with sir James of Normandy, whose mouth they gagged, and whose arms they bound as though he had been a prisoner. In this condition Fulke took him back to the king. The latter, supposing the bound knight was his enemy Fulke, could hardly contain his joy: and he gave Fulke, whom he took by his armour to be sir James of Normandy, his own good steed to pursue the rest of the outlaws. As soon as he was gone, the king ordered his prisoner to be hanged on a tree in the forest; but his dismay was great when on his helmet being taken off, he found it was his own knight. St. James then told the king what had happened, and a much larger body set off to pursue Fulke, and revenge the first disaster. These came suddenly upon the outlaws, who were occupied in a thicket with William fitz Warine, who had been severely wounded in the previous fray. The outlaws were now nearly overpowered, and with difficulty succeeded in carrying off Fulke, who was himself grievously wounded, to their ship, leaving his brother William in the hands of their enemies.

Fulke and his companions again visited the countries of the infidels, and gained there great wealth and reputation, and found some of their companions from whom they had formerly been separated. After various romantic adventures, they returned secretly to England laden with riches, and it was determined that John de Raunpaygne, so

clever at disguises, should take upon him the character of a merchant, and go to London and spy king John. So John de Raunpaygne put on rich apparel, and spoke a sort of corrupt Latin, and, coming to London, he presented himself to the mayor, who understood his language tolerably wēll. And the mayor, charmed with his munificent behaviour, formed a warm attachment for him, and took him and presented him to the king of Westminster, whom he saluted very courteously in his broken Latin. Then the king asked him who he was, and whence he came. "Sire," said John de Raunpaygne, "I am a merchant of Greece, and I have been in Babylonia, and Alexandria, and India Major, and I bring a ship laden with avoirdupoise, rich clothes, precious stones, horses, and other riches which might be of great profit to this kingdom." Said the king, "It is my will that you and yours be welcome in my lands, and I will be your warrant." And the mayor and the merchant were made to stay and dine there in the presence of the king. At length there came two sergeants-at-mace, who led into the hall a large knight, very muscularly shaped, with a long and black beard, but meanly clad; and they seated him in the middle of the court, and gave him to eat. The merchant asked the mayor who he was, and he answered that it was a knight named William fitz Warine, and told him the whole affair of him and his brothers.

John de Raunpaygne was rejoiced at this unexpected adventure, for he supposed that William had been dead, and he gave notice of it without delay to Fulke, who brought up his ship as near to the city as he could. The next day, the pretended merchant presented a beautiful palfrey to the king, and in a day or two he had gained so much respect that he was allowed to go about as he liked in the court, without sus-

picion. One day he took his companions and armed them well, and dressed them outwardly in mariners' gowns, and came to court at Westminster. They were nobly received there, and saw William fitz Warine; and when his keepers led him away to prison, the merchant and his mariners followed them, and, when they least expected it, fell upon them and wrested their prisoner from them, and in spite of all opposition carried him to the boat, and so got away in their ship and put out to sea. It is hardly necessary to say that Fulke was right joyous to recover his brother William.

After staying a few months in Britany, the outlaws again repaired with their ship to the English coast, and landed in one of their favorite haunts, the New Forest. There, by accident, they met the king hunting a boar, and, rendered wise by experience, they seized him and six knights who were with him, carried them into their ship and put out to sea. King John now gave himself up for lost, and was willing to agree to any terms that might be proposed; and after some negotiation the king suddenly changed his sentiments, and not only pardoned Fulke but actually took him into favour. The sincerity of this reconciliation is proved by the letters of protection and pardon which are still preserved on the patent and close rolls in the Tower of London, although it appears by these that the king was in Normandy, and not in England, when it was ratified. In the fifth year of his reign, the month of September 1203, the king gives Fulke fitz Warine and his companions three safe-conducts to repair to his court. The pardon is dated in the month of November,* and it is followed by a list of his

* The pardon is worded as follows:—"Rex, etc. justiciariis, vice-

chief companions who were pardoned at the same time, amounting in number to fifty-three, containing several of the names which have occurred in the foregoing history. The next year the king restored to him his castle of Whitington, as well as the estates of his wife, the lady Maude or Matilda, whom he had married at the instigation of her brother-in-law, the archbishop of Canterbury. From this time Fulke appears to have been a faithful servant to his king, and finally died quietly in his bed, as it appears that his forefathers had done before him. Dugdale has led many writers into error by confounding this Fulke fitz Warine with his son, who was drowned at the battle of Lewes, in 1264.

The adventures of Fulke fitz Warine appear to have been long popular both in French and in English verse, the former written probably very soon after the date of the events to which they relate. They are now only preserved in a prose paraphrase of the French poem, which is itself found in a manuscript in the British Museum, written in the reign of Edward II. From this manuscript an edition was printed in Paris some five or six years ago.*

comitibus, etc. Sciatis quod nos recepimus in gratiam et benevolentiam nostram Fulconem filium Guarini, ad petitionem venerabilis patris nostri J. Norwicensis episcopi et comitis W. Saresberiensis, fratris nostri, remittentes ei excessus quos fecit, eique pardonantes fugam et utlagariam in eum promulgatam. Et ideo vobis mandamus et firmiter præcipimus, quod firmam pacem nostram habeat ubicumque venerit. Teste, etc."

* Histoire de Foulques fitz-Warin, publiée d'après un manuscrit du Musée Britannique, par Francisque Michel. 8vo, Paris, 1840.

ESSAY XVII.

ON THE POPULAR CYCLE OF THE ROBIN HOOD BALLADS.

THE period which we are accustomed to call the *middle ages* has left us, in its literature, many interesting, but at the same time extremely dark and intricate problems. In the semi-heroic period of the history of most peoples, the national poetry appears in the form of cycles, each having for its subject some grand national story, some tradition of times a little more ancient, which had become a matter of national exultation or of national sorrow. Greece had several such cycles. Among our Anglo-Saxon forefathers there was a great cycle parallel apparently to that to which belongs the High German Nibelungen Lied, of which there has fortunately been preserved the fine poem of the adventures of Beowulf the Geat, and of which fragments of other poems are found in the Exeter book, and in some stray leaves of other manuscripts. This cycle was succeeded, after the Normans came in, by that of Arthur and his knights, by the many romances which are supposed to be of Armorican origin, and by the cycle of Charlemagne and his peers. Of the history of the Anglo-Saxon cycle we know nothing; and that of those which followed it, is not much less obscure.

When the Norman cycles became popular in England, the heroes of the Anglo-Saxon poetry were forgotten,

except perhaps in some few instances where the shadow of the older literature became degraded into the form of ballads, which might be sung by the peasant at his ale or at his labour. We need not be surprised, therefore, if we find ballad cycles existing contemporary with and independent of the cycles of the romances. In fact, we do find such cycles; and, as might have been supposed, the character of the persons in the older form, if there existed any older form, is entirely moulded down to suit that of the people amongst whom these ballads were popular. The most extraordinary ballad cycle—indeed, the only one which has preserved its popularity down to our own times, and of which we have large remains—is that of *Robin Hood*.

The only attempt which has been made to investigate the history of the popular cycle of Robin Hood, and to trace its vicissitudes and transformations, is contained in a tract written, curiously enough, as a thesis preparatory to taking the degree of doctor in the university of Paris, its author being, we believe, a Scotchman.* In fact, it is one specimen of the new state of things in France, which has rejected the old fashion of writing probatory essays on the characters of Themistocles and Cicero, and such folks, for the introduction of more modern subjects and more modern notions. Mr. Barry has treated his subject with cleverness and ingenuity; but unfortunately he wanted materials, and was thus deficient in a knowledge of that on which he wrote. He does not appear to have read any more of the older ballads than that of Robin Hood and the

* Thèse de Littérature sur les Vicissitudes et les Transformations du Cycle populaire de Robin Hood. Paris, 1832.

Potter, not having seen that printed in the last edition of Ritson's Robin Hood, under the title of Robin Hood and the Monk, nor even that most important poem the 'Lytell Geste.' He was, moreover, unacquainted with the manuscripts, and knew but little of the history and philology of our language and our poetry. We need not give a stronger proof of this than his derivation of *yeoman* from *yew-man*, i. e. archer (p. 11). His theory is, that the hero of the cycle, Robin Hood, was one of the Saxons who became outlaws in opposing the intrusion and rapacity of the Normans—that the ballads were originally written in alliterative verse at the beginning of the thirteenth century—and that in their transformed shape they still picture to us the feelings of the Saxon peasantry towards their Norman governors. Before, however, considering this hypothesis as to the hero, and as to the origin of the cycle, we will describe and arrange what appear to be the remains of the cycle in its earlier form.

It was necessary to the character of the hero of a popular cycle in England, during some centuries after the Conquest, that he should be signalized by his depredations upon the king's deer. The sheriff and his officers, who enforced the severe forest-laws of the Norman kings, were the oppressors against whom the heroes of the popular romance must make war, and in deceiving whom they must show their craftiness and activity. It is curious, however, that this hostile feeling is always directed against the persons, and not against the authority with which they were armed. In the ballads, the peasantry of England appears always loyal; and one of their most popular cycles was that in which the monarch is represented as being benighted or misled in some one of his forests, and meet-

ing there with some of the destroyers of his deer, who by their loyalty and joviality obtain his forgiveness and favour.

One of the earliest poems on the subject to which we allude, is that of king Edward and the Shepherd, preserved in the same manuscript of the Public Library of the university of Cambridge, which contains the oldest ballad of Robin Hood. Edward had ridden out into Windsor Forest, as it would seem, attended only by his groom, and in the course of his wanderings met with a shepherd, on whose want of courtesy the poet has been pleased to pass a joke.

"With a shepherde con he mete,
And gret hym with wordis swete,
Without any delay;
The shepherde lovyd his hatte so well,
He did hit of nevre a dele,
But seld, 'Sir, gudday!' " *

In reply to the king's inquiries, the shepherd stated that he was born in Windsor, but that he had been compelled to desert his home by the oppressive conduct of the king's purveyors, who not only robbed him of his cattle, leaving him only a notched stick as an acknowledgment, but had violated his daughter, and driven his wife, who was old and hoary, out of doors. His name, he said, was Adam the shepherd. The king called himself Jolly Robin, and said that he was the son of a Welsh knight, that his mother's name was dame Isabel, and that he had a young son who was much loved by the queen, and he promised that by his influence he would procure justice to be done to the

* *Gret*, greeted—*gudday*, good day.

shepherd, whom he invited to visit him at the court the following day. After some conversation, the shepherd proposed that his new acquaintance, Jolly Robin, should go home and dine with him, an offer which was immediately accepted; and on the way Adam boasted much of his skill in the use not of the bow but of the sling. Presently they saw some rabbits (conyngs), and the king proposed that the shepherd should make good his vaunt by killing one of them. The shepherd, however, dissembled.

"Hit is alle the kynges waren,
Ther is nouther knyȝt ne sqwayre,
That dar do sich a dede,
An conyng here to sla
And with the trespas away to ga,
But his side shulde blede.
The warner is hardy and fell,
Sertanly, as I the tell,
He will take no mede.
Whoso dose here sich maistrye,
Be thu wel sicer he shal abye,
And unto preson lede."*

The king continued to urge his proposal, and was further admonished by his companion.

"The herd bade, let sech wordis be,
Sum man myȝt here the,
The were better be still.
Wode has erys, felde has sigt:
Were the forster here now right,
They wordis shuld like the ille.

* *Squayre*, squire—*sicer*, sure—*he shal abie*, suffer retribution.

He has with hym ȝong men thre,
Thei be archers of this contré,
The kyng to serve at wille,
To kepe the dere both day and nyȝt;
And for theire luf a loge is diȝt,
Full hye upon an hill.' " *

The two friends went to dinner, and, after having taught Jolly Robin his drinking words *passilodion* and *berafrynde*, the ale made the shepherd's heart more open, and, enjoining secrecy to his guest, he brought forth pasties of rabbit and venison, with abundance of excellent wine.

" 'Sir,' he seid, 'asay of this:
Thei were ȝisterday qwyk, i-wysse,
Certan, withouten lye,
Hider thei come be mone-liȝt.
Eete therof well apliȝt;
And schewe no curtasye.' "

Afterwards, he explained to the king how he had two slings, with the larger of which he slew deer, and with the smaller rabbits; and how, under cover of night, he conveyed them home; and he showed him his secret cellar, which was well filled with venison and other dainties. On his return home, the king was accompanied through the forest by his new acquaintance, who killed a rabbit with his smaller sling, boasting much of the superiority of his weapon over the bow,—

* *Erys*, ears—*they*, thy—*like the ille*, please thee ill—*luf*, living, *leofan*, A.—S.

"'Sir,' he seid, 'for soth I trowe
This is behette any bowe,
For alle the fedart schafte.'"

and promised to visit Jolly Robin at the court. There, after his arrival next day, the joke was carried on for some time, until the shepherd, to his no small terror, discovered the quality of the confidant to whom he had shown his venison. Here the poem in the manuscript ends abruptly, but we can scarcely doubt that the king ordered reparation to be made to him for the oppressions he had suffered, and perhaps that he made him one of the keepers of his forests.

Another early ballad on the same subject, but still more imperfect, was printed in the British Bibliographer (vol. iv), under the title of "The Kyng and the Hermit." The hermit seems to be the Friar Tuck, and perhaps the Curtal Friar of the Robin Hood ballads. The scene is here laid in the forest of Sherwood.

"It befelle be god Edwards days,
For soth so the romans seys,
Harkyng, I will you telle,
The kyng to Scherwod gan wend,
On hys pleyng for to lend,
* * *
For to solas hym that stond,
The grete herte for to hunte
In frythys and in felle."*

Allured by the hope of finding a large herd of deer,

* *Harkyng*, hearken—*stond*, a while.

which had been seen by an old forester, the king wandered from his company, lost his way in the forest, and at last took shelter in the hut of a hermit. The latter at first received his guest reluctantly; but the king gradually gained his confidence, and venison and wine were brought forth in abundance, the drinking words being *fusty baudyas* and *stryke pantnere*. The king, who in this adventure assumed the name of Jack Fletcher, and represented himself as a poor courtier, invited the hermit to court, and the latter, before parting, showed him his bows and arrows, and his secret stores, of the first of which, by his name, he naturally supposed him to have some knowledge.

"Into a chambyr he hym lede;
The kyng sauwe aboute the hermytes bed
Brod arowys hynge.
The frere gaff him a bow in hond:
'Jake,' he seyd, 'draw up the bond;'
He myght oneth styre the streng,
'Sir,' he seyd, 'so have I blys,
There is no archer that may schot in this,
That is with my lord the kyng.'

"An arow of an elle long
In hys bow he it throng,
And to the hede he gan it hale.
'Ther is no dere in this foreste,
And it wolde one hym feste,
Bot it schuld spyll his skale.
Jake, sith thou can of flecher crafte
Thou may me ese with a schafte.'
Than seyd Jake, 'I schall.'" *

The fragment ends with the departure of the king, but

* *Oneth styre*, hardly stir.

there can be no doubt of the poem having ended prosperously for the hermit.

The second line which we have quoted from this latter poem, would almost lead us to imagine that there had been a French original, did not the subject seem strongly to contradict such a supposition. And, indeed, at the time when this ballad was written, the expressions "as the *romans* says," seems to have become a mere hackneyed phrase, used without any meaning. The spirit of the Norman romances was not that of introducing the peasant and the deer-stealer in a favorable point of view, or of bringing them to prosperity or royal favour. This cycle was the groundwork of many ballads in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, of which one is the well-known ballad of *The King and the Miller of Mansfield*, in his introductory observations on which Percy has pointed out several others of the same class.* A similar and very curious anecdote is told of Henry II by Giraldus Cambrensis, which is either the groundwork of the incident in the popular poetry of a later era, or perhaps a proof of the existence of such ballads at that time; it is printed in the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*, (vol. i, p. 147.) The earliest story of the kind is perhaps the legend of king Alfred's residence with the neat-herd; the latest, one which has been told, we think, as having occurred in the reign of queen Anne. Prince George of Denmark having landed unexpectedly at Bristol, and not having been recognized by the merchants who were at the time on the pier where he was walking, was accosted by a poor artisan, who asked

* They have furnished our great romance writer with the hint of a beautiful scene in *Ivanhoe*.

him if he were not the queen's husband, expressed his regret that so little respect had been shown to him, and invited him to partake of his own humble fare. The prince dined with the artisan, who was afterwards, with his wife, invited to court by the queen, and himself knighted, and his wife presented, if we remember right, with a watch.

We proceed to the kindred cycle which celebrated the deeds of the open outlaw, personified in the character of Robin Hood. That the Robin Hood ballads were popular before the middle of the fourteenth century, we have direct testimony. Fordun, who wrote towards 1350, or rather, perhaps, Bowyer, who interpolated Fordun's history in the fifteenth century, observes, "Hoc in tempore (i. e. Hen. III) de exhæredatis surrexit et caput erexit ille famosissimus sicarius Robertus Hode et Littell Johanne, cum eorum complicibus, de quibus stolidum vulgus hianter in comœdiis et tragœdiis prurientur festum faciunt, et super cæteras romancias, mimos, et bardanos cantitare dilectantur." (Ed. Hearne, p. 774.) And in that remarkable and valuable poem, *The Visions of Piers Plowman*, which was written in the reign of Edward III, Sloth is introduced as confessing, amongst other things,

> "But I kan rymes of Robyn Hood,
> And Randolf erl of Chestre;
> Ac neither of oure Lord ne of oure Lady
> The leeste that evere was maked."
> (*l.* 3277)

These passages, particularly that of Fordun, describe a cycle of poetry essentially popular, which originated with the people and rested with the people, but of which, as it

then existed, it has been supposed that we have no remaining specimen.

We are satisfied, however, that we have a Robin Hood ballad of the fourteenth century, one of those which were sung by the contemporaries of Fordun and the author of *Piers Plowman's Visions*. It is contained in a manuscript preserved in the public library of the University of Cambridge (Ff. 5. 48); has been incorrectly printed in Jamieson's *Ballads;* still more inaccurately in the *Ancient Metrical Tales*, edited by Mr. Hartshorne; and again, though not altogether accurately, in the last edition of Ritson's *Robin Hood*, as may be seen by comparing the few lines we shall presently quote from it. It is the same manuscript which was once in the possession of Withers the poet, who lent it to Bedwell, and the latter printed from it that singular ballad *The Tournament of Tottenham*. Internal evidence seems to prove that the greater part of the poems contained in this manuscript are as old as the reign of Edward II; we have now but an indistinct recollection of the hand-writing, but it is on paper, and if this may be looked on as inconsistent with the supposition that it is itself of that age, it may be a verbatim copy from a manuscript of that date. Some of the reasons which seem to support this idea, are :—

(I.) One article of this manuscript, near the middle of the volume, is a brief poetical chronicle of the kings of England. It is brought down to the time of Edward II, in whose reign it ends thus—

> " After him (*i. e.* Ed. I.) regned Edwarde his sone,
> And hase his londe alle and some,

Make we us glaad and blithe, lordingus,
For thus endyn these kingus.
Jhesu Crist and saint Lenard
Save this king Edward,
And gif hym grace his londe to ȝeme,
That Jhesu Crist be to queme,
Thrug his hestis ten:
Syng we now alle, Amen."—*Explicit.*

We can easily imagine that in many instances a poem like this, written at one period, may have been copied verbatim at a later period without continuation; but, from the general style of the present manuscript, and from the consideration that this poem as well as many others in the same volume were evidently intended for recitation, we can hardly suppose that from political feeling such a conclusion as the foregoing would have been retained after the second Edward's death. It is worthy of remark, that a poem apparently the same as this, is found in the Auchinlec Manuscript, which seems, by the description of Sir Walter Scott, to have been continued up to the beginning of the next reign, when that manuscript was written. —"He appears to have concluded his history during the minority of Edward III. . . . . The concluding paragraph begins—

"Now Jesu Crist and seyn[t] Richard
Save the yong king Edward,
And ȝif him grace his land to ȝeme,
That it be Jesu Crist to queme,' &c."
Explicit liber Regum Angliæ.

(II.) The poem of *King Edward and the Shepherd,* which we have already described, and which is preserved

in this manuscript, bears internal proofs of having been written during the reign of the second Edward. It must not be forgotten that the spirit and apparent aim of this cycle of poems was to stir up among the people loyalty towards their king and hatred towards the overbearing barons, and therefore it might naturally be expected, that the king introduced as the object of their esteem would be the reigning monarch.* The present poem may perhaps have been an alteration of the previously existing ballad of *Edward the First and his Reeve*, which is mentioned by Percy as having been preserved in his folio manuscript. In the poem we have mentioned, the king pretends that he is a knight of the court.—

" My fader was a Walshe knyȝt,
Dame Isabell my moder hyȝt,
For sothe as I tell the;
In the castell was hir dwellyng,
Thorow commaundment of the kyng,
When she thar shuld be.
Now wayte thou wher that I was borne;
Thet *other* Edward here beforne
Full well he lovyd me."

The Welsh knight is evidently intended to be king Edward the Second, whose queen was Isabelle, and we might hence be inclined to suppose our disguised king to be the third Edward, did not the expression " thet other

* When the reigning king was unpopular, the name of the preceding king would probably be preserved in the popular poetry. The name of Edward II, however, would not, we think, be suffered to take the place of his successor. There seems, too, some reasons for thinking that the writer of our poems was favorable to the royal party, during the second Edward's reign.

Edward," which is repeated thrice in the poem, seem to prove decisively that when it was written, *two* Edwards only had occupied the throne. Again, the passage immediately following this,—

"I have a son is with the qwhene,
She lovys hym well, as I wene,
That dar I savely say;
And he pray hir of a bone*
3if that hit be for to done,
She will not onys say nay,"

seems evidently to describe the young prince who was afterwards Edward III. The third passage, moreover, where this expression occurs,

"The stewarde seid to Joly Robyn,†
'Goo wesshe, sir, for it is tyme,
At the furst begynyng;
And, for that *odur* Edwart love,
Thou shalt sitte here above,
In stidde alle of the kyng,'"

could hardly have been said, unless 'Joly Robyn' were Edward II. The following passage seems to fix the time of its having been written to the period when the earls of Lancaster and Warren were courted by the king, and when there appeared to be some hopes of tranquillity in the kingdom :—the shepherd had arrived at court,—

"'Joly Robin,' he said, 'I pray the,
Speke with me a worde in privaté.'
'For God,' said the kyng, 'gladly.'
He freyned the kyng in his ere,
What lordis that thei were
That stondis here hym bye.

* *Pray hir of a bone*, ask a boon of her. † *i. e.* the king Edward.

'The erle of Lancastur is thet on,
And the erle of Waryn sir John,
Bolde and as hardy:
Thei mow do mycull with the kyng,
I have tolde hem of thy thyng,'
Then seid he 'gramercy.' "

(III.) The only poem which seems to be of a more recent date than the reign of Edward II. is the last article but one of its contents, the prophecies of Thomas of Erceldoun, of which this is by far the oldest and best copy. The allusions, however, in this poem are vague and uncertain, and admit of no better explanation than can be given by mere conjectures. We have a proof of this in the circumstance that Sir Walter Scott, who had not seen the Cambridge MS. and was thus obliged to rely upon the erroneous descriptions which have been given of it, supposed it to contain allusions to the battles of Floddon and Pinkie. It is a poem which seems to have been republished at different times, with additional circumstances, and more explicit allusions to those which were supposed to have been accomplished. If the bastard, mentioned in the third fit of our Cambridge copy, who was to be the ruler of all Britain, be Edward the First—the circumstance which was to mark the conclusion of his reign—

"The bastard shalle go in the Holy Land;
Trow this wel as I the say:
Tak his soule to his hande,
Jhesu Cyriste, that mycull may,"

proves it part of an edition published as early as 1306, when that king made a vow to end his life in an expedition

against the Saracens. It is probable that in our Cambridge copy there is no allusion to events of a later period than the reign of Edward the Second. The curious mention of Black Agnes, the celebrated countess of Dunbar, who defended that castle against the English in 1337, seems to create a difficulty. But there is in the poem no allusion to that siege, we are not aware that the prophecy concerning her end was ever fulfilled, and the whole seems to show rather a feeling of resentment against her on the part of the English, arising from her already established character and her known opposition to the English interests. The singular connexion, too, which is described as existing between her and Thomas, the supposititious author of the prophecies, compared with the allusion at the head of the brief prophecies in the Harleian MS. No. 2253,* of the reign of the second Edward, would lead us to suppose that the two pieces were contemporary.

Our conviction of the importance of establishing the age of the pieces in this manuscript has perhaps led us to make too long a digression from our more immediate subject. If it be all a work of the reign of the second Edward, or even supposing it to have been written at the end of the century, and copied from an older collection, there can be no doubt of the ballad it contains being one of those popular songs of Robin Hood, to which allusion is made in the history of Fordun, and by the poet who wrote the visions of Piers Plowman. It shows us, which indeed might be collected from the passage of this latter poem where they are called 'rhymes,'

* La countesse de Donbar demanda à Thomas de Escedoune, quant la guere d'Escoce prendreit fin, e yl la respowndy e dyt, &c.

that these popular productions were not then written in alliterative verse, but that they were composed in the same metre which was the general characteristic of our black-letter ballads. The earliest of the Robin Hood ballads, which has been preserved, is written in a southern and correct dialect, and is much superior in poetical execution to any that follow. The opening is simple and beautiful.

"In somer when the shawes be sheyn,
And leves be large and long,
Hit is full mery in feyre foreste
To here the foulys song,

To se the dere draw to the dale
And leve the hilles hee,
And shadow hem in the leves grene
Under the grene-wode tre." *

One May morning, in Whitsuntide, when the sun shone bright, and the birds sung, Robin Hood determined to go to Nottingham to hear mass. Little John, who was his only companion, proposed to 'shoot a penny' as they passed through the wood, and he having gained five shillings from his master, a strife arose, which ended in their mutually parting from each other. Little John returned to the forest of Sherwood, and Robin Hood proceeded to Nottingham, where he entered St. Mary's church, and knelt down before the rood. A monk, whom he had robbed of a hundred pounds, recognised him, and carried information to the sheriff, who caused the gates of the town to be closed, surrounded the church with his company, and secured the outlaw, who broke his sword on the sheriff's

* *Shawes be sheyn*, woods are bright—*hee*, high.

head in defending himself. The monk was dispatched with tidings to the king at London, and Little John and Much, who had learned the disaster which had happened to their master, determined to way-lay him.

"Forthe then went these ȝemen too,
Litul Johan and Moche in fere,
And lokid on Moche emys hows,
The hye-way lay full nere.

Litul Johan stode at a wyndow in the mornyng,
And lokid forth at a stage,
He was war when the munke came ridyng,
And wyth hym a litul page.

'Be my feith,' seid Litul Johan to Moch,
'I can the tel tithyngus gode:
I se wher the munke cumys rydyng,
I know hym be his wyde hode.' "*

Little John and Much went to the monk, learnt from his own mouth the tidings he carried, slew him and his page, and themselves carried the letters of the sheriff to the king, telling him that the monk who should have brought them was dead by the way. He was much rejoiced by the contents of the sheriff's letters, rewarded well the bearers, made them both yeomen of the crown, and gave them letters to the sheriff of Nottingham commanding that Robin Hood should be sent to the king. On their arrival at Nottingham, they found the gates fastened, and they were not admitted until they had shown the king's seal. When the sheriff saw the letters, he inquired, naturally enough, after

* *In fere*, in company—*emys*, uncle's.

the monk, and was informed by little John that the king was so gratified by the intelligence of which he had been the bearer, that he had made him abbot of Westminster. At night Little John and Much went to the jail.

"Litul Johan callid up the jayler,
And bade hym rise anon,
He seid Robyn Hode had brokyn preson
And out of hit was gon.

The porter rose anon, sertan,
As sone as he herd Johan calle.
Litul Johan was redy with a swerd,
And bare hym to the walle.

'Now wil I be porter,' seid litul Johan,
'And take the keyes in honde.'
He tok the way to Robyn Hode,
And sone he hym unbonde.

He gaf hym a gode swerde in his hond,
His hed with for to kepe;
And ther as the walls were lowyst
Anon down can thei lepe."

When they reached the forest, Robin and Little John were immediately reconciled, and the escape of the outlaw was celebrated by festivity among his followers—

"They filled in wyne, and made hem glad,
Under the levys smale,
And ȝete pastes of venysan
That gode was with ale."

The anger of the king loses itself in his admiration of the fidelity of Little John to his master—

" 'He is trew to his maister,' seide owre kyng,
'I sei, be swete seynt Johan,
He lovys better Robyn Hode
Then he dose us ychon.*

Robyn Hode is ever bond to hym,
Bothe in strete and stalle.
Speke no more of this mater,' seid oure kyng,
'But Johan has begyled us alle.' "

In the foregoing ballad we recognize the same popular story, which again appears in the more northern ballad of 'Adam Bel, Clym of the Clough, and William of Cloudislee;' three outlaws who made free with the king's deer in the forest of Inglewood in Cumberland. William visited his wife at Carlisle, and was recognized by an old woman, who carried information to the sheriff; the towns-people were raised, the house surrounded, and the outlaw taken, after a desperate resistance, in which his bow was broken. He was condemned to be hanged, but his companions entered the town by showing to the porter a letter which, as they pretended, bore the king's seal, and succeeded in liberating William, and carrying him to the green wood, where he found his wife and children. The king was much enraged when he heard of his escape, but in the end the yeomen were pardoned.

While speaking of this ballad of Adam Bel, &c. of the age of which we are very uncertain, the earliest copy of it being a black-letter tract of the earlier part of the sixteenth century, we may observe, that it contains another popular story which became one of the Robin Hood cycle, that

* *Ychon*, each one.

wherein the outlaws go to the king for pardon, which they obtain by the intercession of the queen, who favours them.

There existed, previous to the middle of the fifteenth century, another Robin Hood ballad, wherein the hero was brought into peril by his devout attendance upon mass, and which may be rightly placed in the class of *contes devots*, or saint's legends. We have already expressed a doubt of the authenticity of the passage of Fordun, where mention is made of our hero; indeed, it has every appearance of being an interpolation, it only being found in one of the late manuscripts, and differing so much from that author's general manner. The name of Robin Hood is mentioned merely for the sake of introducing the story of this ballad, how, in his retreat in Barnsdale, he heard mass regularly every day, how in the midst of his devotions, he was one day warned of the approach of the sheriff and his officers; how he disdained to retreat until the holy service was ended—and how, for his piety, an easy victory was given him over his too numerous enemies, in consequence of which he ever afterwards held the clergy in special esteem.

The second ballad, apparently, in point of antiquity which has been preserved, occurs also in a manuscript of the Public Library of the University of Cambridge, marked Ee. 4, 35, written not, as Ritson imagined, in the reign of Henry the Seventh, but in that of Henry the Sixth, as appears by a memorandum on one page, setting forth the expenses of the feast on the marriage of the king with Margaret:—"Thys ys exspences of fflesche at the mariage of my ladey Marg'et, that sche had owt off Eynglonde," &c. The orthography is rude, and the dialect would seem to be that of some one of our midland counties. It would

appear, too, by the blunders with which it abounds, to have been taken down from recitation.

In this ballad, Robin Hood is represented as visiting the sheriff in the disguise of a potter, to whom he had given his own garments. Robin carried his ware to Nottingham, where he put up his horse, and cried "Pots! Pots!" in the midst of the town, right opposite the sheriff's gate. He sold his pots quickly, because he gave for threepence what was worth fivepence, and when he had but five left, he sent them as a present to the sheriff's wife. In return for this courtesy, the pretended potter was invited to dine with the sheriff, who received him kindly, and during the dinner mention was made of a great shooting match for forty shillings, which was soon to be tried. The potter went to the shooting, and, borrowing a bow of the sheriff, proved himself more skilful in its use than the sheriff's men. He then took a bow from his cart, which he said had been given him by Robin Hood, on which the sheriff demanded if he knew the outlaw, and if he would lead him to where he might be found. The potter immediately offered to be his guide, and on the morrow they travelled together towards the forest, where the birds were singing on the branches.

"And when he cam yn to the fforeyst,
Yender the leffes grene,
Berdys there sange on bowhes prest,
Het was gret goy to se.

'Here het ys merey to be,' sayde Roben,
'For a man that had hawt to spende.
Be may horne he schall awet,
Yef Roben Hode be here.'" *

* *Yender*, under—*goy*, joy—*hawt*, anything—*he*, ye—*Yef*, if.

At the sound of Robin's horn, Little John and his companions hastened to the spot, welcomed the sheriff, and, before he left them, deprived him of his horse and his "other gere." "Hither you come on horse," said Robin, who had now thrown aside his assumed character, "and home you shall go on foot. Greet well the good woman your wife: I send her, as a present, a white palfrey, which ambles as the wind. For her sake you shall receive no further harm." The sheriff, glad to escape, carried home the message to his wife:—

"With that she toke op a lowde lawhyng,
And swhare, be hem that deyed on tre,
'Now haffe yow payed ffor all the pottys
That Robin gaffe to me.'"

The histories of Hereward, Eustace the Monk, and Fulke fitz Warine, are extremely interesting to us, as proving how common in those ages were the kind of stories which formed the material of our Robin Hood ballads. The same stratagems, which outwitted the sheriff and his men, were used by Eustace to deceive the count of Boulogne. Eustace, as well as Hereward, adopted on one occasion the disguise of a potter, whom he had compelled to exchange garments with him.

In a collection of songs and carols among the Sloane manuscripts, in the British Museum, which an incidental coincidence has proved to be written in the Warwickshire dialect, perhaps nearly contemporary with the ballad last mentioned, is a song that appears to belong to our cycle, at least by its subject, if not by the person whose death it celebrates. It recounts the fate of a yeoman named Robin,

who had gone to the green wood with his companion Gandeleyn:—

"I herde a carpyng of a clerk
Al at ȝone wodes ende,
Of gode Robyn and Gandeleyn
Was ther non other gynge;

Stronge thevys wern tho chylderin non,
But bowmen goode and hende;
He wentyn to wode to getyn hem fleych,*
If God wold it hem sende."

Towards evening they met with half a hundred fallow deer, of which the fattest fell by Robin's arrow. Scarcely had the deer fallen, when Robin himself was felled by an arrow from an unknown hand:—

"Gandeleyn lokyd hym est and lokyd west,
And sowt under the sunne,
He saw a lytil boy he clepyn
Wrennok of Doune;

A good bowe in his hond,
A brod arewe therine,
And fowre and xx. goode arwis
Trusyd in a thrumme."

'Wrennok,' it would appear, was one of the keepers of the forest, and he immediately challenged Gandeleyn. They let fly their arrows at each other, and the former was slain. The exultation of Gandeleyn on having thus revenged the death of his master Robin, finishes his song:—

* *Fleych*, flesh.

"Now xalt thu never ȝelpe, Wrennok,
At ale ne at wyn,
That thu hast slawe goode Robyn
And his knave Gandeleyn;

Now xalt thu never ȝelpe, Wrennok,
At wyn ne at ale,
That thu hast slawe goode Robyn
And Gandeleyyn his knawe." *

These are all the genuine remains of the early Robin Hood cycle, which we at present possess. We come now to that singular production, the "Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode," which was first printed by Wynkyn de Worde, at the latter end of the fifteenth century, and which would seem to be an attempt to string together some of the ballads that were then popular, into something like a consistent story. It is, in fact, an epic poem, and it is, as such, both perfect and beautiful.

One, perhaps, of the ballads which contributed to the formation of this poem, may have been simply the adventure of Robin Hood and the Knight, which here occupies the first and second 'fyttes,' and is made to run more or less through the whole. The knight was a character respected by the peasantry, and in the personage of the unfortunate and injured Sjr Richard of the Lee, he probably drew forth as much commiseration from those to whom the adventure was sung in the village alehouse, as in the courtly hall of the nobles when he appeared in misfortune in the romances of Sir Cleges or Sir Amadas. They were all the same story, under different forms, in the one instance

* *Xalt*, shalt—*ȝelpe*, boast.

reduced to a popular shape. Robin sends Little John, Much, and Scathelock, to seek for a guest to dinner, having first admonished them that they should not injure husbandmen, good yeomen, or knights and squires who were good fellows, but that their hostilities should be more particularly directed against bishops and archbishops, and, above all, against the sheriff of Nottingham :—

"But loke ye do no housbonde harme
That tylleth with his plough;

No more ye shall no good yeman
That walketh by grene-wode shawe,
Ne no knyght, ne no squyer,
That wolde be a good felawe.

These byshoppes and thyse archebyshoppes,
Ye shall them bete and bynde;
The hye sheryfe of Notynghame,
Hym holde in your mynde."

The party went up to the 'Sayles' and Watling-street, and at length they espied a knight, all dreary and melancholy, riding by a 'derne strete' in Barnysdale. Little John addressed him courteously, and bade him to dinner with his master, who, he said, had been long waiting for him. Robin Hood received the stranger with a hearty welcome, treated him with great respect, and they sat down together to a handsome feast; after which, according to custom, the outlaws were proceeding to make him 'pay for his dinner.' But the knight excused himself on the ground of having only ten shillings in his possession, which, on searching his coffer, was found to be true, and he told the history of his misfortunes.

"'Within two or three yere, Robyn,' he sayd,
'My neyghbores well it kende,
Foure hondreth pounde of good money
Full wel than myght I spende.

Now have I no good,' sayd the knyght,
'But my chyldren and my wyfe;
God hath shapen such an ende,
Tyll God may amende my lyfe.'

'In what maner,' sayd Robyn,
'Hast thou lows thy ryches?'
'For my grete foly,' he sayd,
'And for my kindenesse.

I had a sone, for soth, Robin,
That sholde have ben my eyre,
When he was twenty wynter olde,
In felde wolde juste full feyre:

He slew a knight of Lancastshyre,
And a squyre bolde:
For to save hym in his ryght
My goodes beth sette and solde;

My londes beth sette to wedde, Robyn,*
Untyll a certayne daye,
To a ryche abbot here besyde,
Of Saynt Mary abbey.'"

Robin generously lent the knight, for a year, four hundred pounds, the sum for which his estates had been pledged, and the outlaws clothed him in new habits becoming his profession, Little John being equipped as his

* *Wedde*, pledge.

squire. By this means the knight regained his lands, but his friendship for the forester drew him into fresh misfortunes, till finally Robin and Sir Richard were both reconciled to the king.

The next ballad which seems to have been used in the compilation of this 'geste,' was the same story, a little varied in its details, with that of Robin and the potter, already noticed. Little John, in disguise, distinguished himself at an archery match held by the sheriff of Nottingham. The sheriff, pleased with his skill, asked his name, was told that it was 'Reynaud Grenelefe,' and finally hired him for twenty marks a year. One day he was left at home, without provisions, which he took from the larder and buttery, in spite of the steward and butler, but the cook fought with him desperately, and in the end they agreed to go together to Robin Hood, which they did, taking with them the sheriff's plate and money, and were joyously received by the outlaws. Thereupon, Little John, still in his disguise as the sheriff's man, sought his master in the forest, where he was hunting, told him that he had just seen seven score of deer in a herd; and under pretence of leading him to the place, took him to Robin Hood, by whom he was feasted in his own plate, and was afterwards punished by being compelled to lie all night bare on the ground with the outlaws. Before he was allowed to depart, the sheriff swore solemnly that he would never injure Robin or his men.

The third ballad used in the formation of this 'geste,' was one of Robin Hood and the monk. Little John, with Much and Scathelock, go up to the Sayles and Watling-street, and in Barnisdale meet with two black monks and

their attendants. The latter were defeated, and one of the monks was brought to dine in the outlaw's 'lodge.'

"Robyn dyde adowne his hode
The monk whan that he se;*
The monk was not so curteyse,
His hode then let he be.

'He is a chorle, m. yster, by dere worthy God,'
Then said Lytell Johan.
'Thereof no force,' sayd Robyn,
'For curteysy can he none.'"

Robin called together his men, and compelled the monk to join them at their meal. After dinner the outlaw, naturally enough, inquired after the monk's money:—

"'What is in your cofers?' sayd Robyn,
'Trewe than tell thou me.'
'Syr,' he sayd, 'twenty marke,
Al so mote I the.'

'Yf there be no more,' sayd Robyn,
'I wyll not one peny;
Yf thou hast myster of ony more,
Syr, more I shall lende to the;

And yf I fynde more,' sayd Robyn,
'I-wys thou shalte it for-gone
For of thy spendynge sylver, monk,
Therof wyll I ryght none.

* *i. e.* When he saw the monk.

Go nowe forthe, Lytell Johan,
And the trouth tell thou me;
If there be no more but twenty marke,
No peny that I se.'

Lytell Johan spred his mantell downe,
As he had done before,
And he tolde out of the monkes male,
Eyght hundreth pounde and more." *

The monk was robbed of his money, and dismissed.

A similar story is told of Eustace the Monk, in the curious Norman poem of the thirteenth century to which we have already alluded. Eustace was lurking with his men, as usual, in the territory of Boulogne—(*l.* 1745).

"Li abbés de Jumiaus venoit;
Wistasce esgarde, si le voit:
'Dans abbés,' dist-il, 'estés là;
Que portés-vous, ne l' celés jà?'
Dist li abbés: 'A vous c'afiert?'
A poi c'Uistasces ne le fiert:
'C'afiert à moi, sire coillart!
Par ma teste! g'i aurai part.
Descendés tost, n'en parlés plus,
Ou vous serés jà si batus
Ne la vauriiés pour .c. livres.'
Li abbés [cuide] k'il soit ivres;
Il l'a . . molt douchement.
Dist a l'abés; Ales-vous-ent;
N'est pas ichi que vous querés.

* *Al so mote I the*, as I may thrive—*myster*, need—*forgone*, lose—*male*, box.

Wistasces dist : ' Ne me ciflés ;
Descendés jus isnielement,
Ou là vous ira malement.'
L'abbés descent, grant paor a,
Et Wistasces li demanda
Combien il porte od lui d'avoir.
Dist li abbés : ' .iiij. mars voir,
J'ai od moi .iiij. mars d'argent.'
Wistasces l'escouce errammentt ;
Bien trouva .xxx. mars ou puis,
Les .iiij. mars li a rendus,
Tant cum il dist que il avoit.
Li abbés fu corechiés à droit.
Se li abbés éust dit voir,
Tout r'éust éu son avoir.
Li abbés son avoir perdi
Pour tant seulement 'il menti."

" The abbot of Jumiaux came by :
Eustace looks and sees him.
' Dan abbot,' said he, ' stand there :
What do you carry ? Do not conceal it.'
Said the abbot, ' What is that to you ?'
Eustace was near striking him.
' What is it to me, sir scoundrel
By my head ! I will have a part of it.
Come down quickly ; speak no more of that,
Or you shall be so beaten,
As you would not for a hundred pounds.'
The abbot thought that he was drunk ;
He remonstrated very gently.
The abbot said, ' Go along !
What you seek is not here.'
Eustace said, ' Mock not at me ;
Descend quickly,
Or it will go ill with you there.'

The abbot descends; he has great fear;
And Eustace demanded of him,
How much money he carries with him,
Said the abbot, 'Four marks, truly;
I have with me four marks of silver.'
Eustace immediately lifted up his gown;
He found full thirty marks or more.
The four marks he has given him back,
As much as he said he had.
The abbot was of course cross.
If the abbot had said the truth,
He would have had again all his property.
The abbot lost his property
Only because he lied."

Perhaps the only other ballad used by the compiler of the 'geste' was that which furnished the last two fits, the meeting of Robin and the king; and it would seem that he had used the 'explicit' of the ballad itself, or that he had it in his mind, when he wrote at the end—"Explycit kynge Edwarde and Robyn Hode and Lytell Johan." The mention of king *Edward*, the first instance of the name of a king which occurs in these ballads, is itself curious. Does it show that the ballad which the writer of the 'geste' used, was written in the reign of one of the Edwards, and that in the cycle sung at the Robin Hood festivals, when the king was introduced, they gave him the name of the king at the time reigning, as we have seen was the case in a collateral cycle.

The king and his knights came to Nottingham to take Robin Hood:—

"There our kynge was wont to se
Herdes many one,
He coud unneth fynde one dere.
That bare ony good horne."

The loss of his deer enraged the king, and he waited half a year at Nottingham in hope of hearing some news of the outlaw, but in vain. At length a forester offered to gratify the king with a sight of Robin Hood, if he would venture with five of his knights, all in the disguise of monks, where he would lead him. The king accepted the offer, took himself the disguise of an abbot, and rode, singing by the way, to the 'grene-wode.' There he was accosted by Robin Hood, who demanded of him his money, of which however he accepted only the half, giving him back the rest for his 'spendynge.'

"Full curteysly Robyn gan say,
'Syr, have this for your spendyng,
We shall mete another day.'
'Gramercy,' then sayd our kynge.

'But well the greteth Edwarde our kynge,
And sent to the his scale,
And byddeth the com to Notyngham,
Both to mete and mele.'

He toke out the brode tarpe,
And sone he lete hym se.
Robyn coud his courteysy,
And set hym on his kne.

'I love no man in all the worlde
So well as I do my kynge.
Welcome is my lordes seale;
And, monke, for thy tydynge,

Syr abbot, for thy tydynges,
To day thou shalt dyne with me,
For the love of my kynge,
Under my trystell tre.'"

Accordingly, he led the abbot to the table, and, at the sound of his horn, seven score of his men came 'on a rowe.'

"All they kneeled on theyr kne,
Full fayre before Robyn.
The kynge sayd hymselfe untyll,
And swore by saynt Austyn,

'Here is a wonder semely syght,
Me thynketh, by Goddes pyne:*
His men are more at his byddynge
Then my men be at myn.'"

After dinner there was shooting, the marks being, as the abbot thought, too long by fifty paces, and it was agreed that every one who missed should lose his arrow and receive a buffet on the head, which buffet Robin administered without mercy to all who incurred the penalty. At length Robin missed the mark himself:

"At the last shot that Robyn shot,
For all his frendes fare,
Yet he fayled of the garlonde
Thre fyngers and mare.

Then bespake good Gylberte,
And thus he gan say:
'Mayster,' he sayd, 'your takyll is lost,
Stand forth and take your pay.'

'If it be so,' sayd Robyn,
'That may no better be;
Sir abbot, I delyver the myn arowe,
I pray the, syr, serve thou me.'

* *Pyne*, suffering.

'It falleth not for myn order,' sayd our kyng,
'Robyn, by thy leve,
For to smyte no good yeman,
For doute I shoude hym greve.'

'Smyte on boldely,' sayd Robyn,
'I give the large leve.'
Anone our kynge, with that worde,
He folde up his sleve,

And sych a buffet he gave Robyn,
To grounde he yede full nere.*
'I make myn avowe to God,' sayd Robyn,
'Thou arte a stalworthe frere.

There is pith in thyn arme,' sayd Robyn,
I trowe thou canst well shote.' "

The strength of his arm excited suspicion, for it was one of the qualifications of royalty; the king was recognized; all the outlaws fell upon ther knees before him, and Robin asked pardon for their trespasses, which was granted, and he himself was taken to court. On their return to Nottingham, the king and his attendants having been clad in the outlaw's livery, 'Lincolne grene,' they went shooting along the way:—

" Our kynge and Robyn rode togyder,
For soth as I you say,
And they shote plucke buffet,
As they went by the way;

And many a buffet our kynge wan
Of Robyn Hode that day;
And nothynge spared good Robyn
Our kynge in his pay."

* *Yede*, went.

Robin, however, was soon tired of court, and returned to his former life and haunts, where he lived twenty-two years, till he was betrayed by the prioress of 'Kyrkesly,' for the love of Sir Roger of Doncaster 'that was her owne speciall.'

We have now given an abstract of all the remains of the cycle of Robin Hood, in its older form. We have seen that it consisted of the common popular stories of outlaw warfare in the green wood, as they were sung at the festivals and rejoicings of the peasantry, with whom, at the time the songs were made, such tales must naturally have been favourites. As far as we can judge, the different incidents of the cycle were not numerous, and it is probable that the compiler of the 'geste' introduced into it all that he knew. This poem, indeed, seems at the period of its publication to have been the grand representative of the cycle, and to have contained at least most of that which was commonly sung about the roads and streets. In a curious "lytell geste" printed also by Wynkyn de Worde, and of which, as far as we know, the only copy extant is preserved in the public library, Cambridge,* teaching "how the plowman lerned his pater noster," which was contrived by the priest, who sent to him in a time of scarcity, a number of poor men in proper order, each having for name one of the words of the prayer, on promise of paying the plowman if he remembered them in the order in which they came; five of them seem to have sung this very *geste*. The passage, by the way, was unknown to Ritson when he compiled his preface.

* This "geste" is printed in the first volume of the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ* p. 43.

"Then came Panem, Nostrum, Cotidianum, Da nobis, Hodie,
Amonge them fyve they had but one peny,
That was gyven them for Goddes sake,
They sayde therwith that they wolde mery make,
Eche had two busshelles of whete that was gode,
They songe goynge homewarde a *gest of Robyn Hode*."

When ballads began to be printed, and were spread over the country in the shape of broadsides, the few which had existed when their chief repository was the memory of the peasantry, was found to be insufficient. The more easily it was gratified, the more greedy became the desire after novelty. But the ballad-writers of after-times were not endowed with very inventive minds; and it was, therefore, much more usual to change a little the circumstances and persons of the older stories, and to publish them to the world as new, than to write originals. It would not be difficult to point out examples of this among the modern ballads. That originals, however, were written, there can be no doubt. It was now, indeed, that outward causes began to affect the cycle, for the romances of the Normans had become degraded, and had taken popular forms, and even their stories have found a place among those of Robin Hood and Little John.

The foregoing slight review of the material of the cycle, and of the nature of the stories which formed it, brings us at once to conclude that the character and popular history of Robin Hood was formed upon the ballads, and not the ballads upon the person. There arises, however, thereupon, an interesting question—who was the person that in these ballads bears the name or title of Robin Hood?—a question at the same time which certainly does not admit of a very easy solution.

The notion that he was a person living in the time of our first Richard or third Henry, seems to rest entirely on the passage in the history of Fordun, which passage, as we have already said, was written perhaps not earlier than the middle of the fifteenth century, and of which the only foundation was one of the ballads in which the name of a king Henry occurred, probably proving only that the ballad was written in the reign of a king of that name. Wyntown, also, who places Robin Hood at the date 1283, by his mention of Inglewood and Barnesdale, had evidently the ballads in his mind.

> "Lytil Jhon and Robyn Hude
> Wayth-men were commendyd gud:
> In Yngilwode and Barnysdale,
> Thai oysyd all this tyme thare trawale."

The life, by Ritson, prefixed to his edition of the Robin Hood ballads, with the pedantic notes which illustrate it, is the barren production of a poor mind. The "accurate" *mister* Ritson, who condemned with such asperity the slightest wanderings of the imaginations of others, has therein exhibited some truly pleasant vagaries of his own. He gives us an essay upon the *private character* of the outlaw! His mode of accounting for the silence with which the chroniclers and historians of those times have passed over the name of Robin Hood, is itself curious:— "The principal if not sole reason why our hero is never once mentioned by Matthew Paris, Benedictus Abbas, or any other ancient English historian, was most probably his avowed enmity to churchmen; and history, in former times, was written by none but monks. They were unwilling to

praise the actions which they durst neither misrepresent nor deny. Fordun and Major [who, by the way, only retailed Fordun in this matter] being foreigners, have not been deterred by this *professional spirit* from rendering homage to his virtues!!" Where Ritson learnt that it was the habit of the early historians to omit mention of those who had an "avowed enmity to churchmen," or what influence the fact of their being foreigners could have on their *professional* spirit, does not appear to be a thing easy to be discovered. The circumstance that no one ever heard of such a place is not sufficient to justify even a suspicion in his mind that there ever existed such a town as Locksley, in Nottinghamshire, where the latter ballads place Robin's birth. Lastly, after all that Ritson might have thought proper to advance to the contrary, we are inclined to join with Mr. Parkin, whom he quotes with a sneer, in thinking the pedigree of Robin Hood, which was given by Dr. Stukeley, to be "quite jocose."

Mr. Barry, in his "Thèse de Littérature," has advanced an ingenious and much more plausible theory. He, as we have already observed, supposes that Robin Hood was one of the outlaws who had resisted the first intrusions of the Normans, and compares him with Hereward, who returned from foreign lands to avenge the injury done to his family by William, by the death of the Norman who had had the temerity to intrude upon his heritage, and who gathered his friends and supporters and retired to the fastnesses of the isle of Ely, where he long bade defiance to the Conqueror.

"Tous ces hommes qui restaient des outlaws, malgré leur physionomie et leur dénomination nouvelle, avaient un caractère commun. Saxons, ils détestaient les Nor-

mands, leurs officiers sans pitié, et leurs prêtres avides. . . . Mais en revanche, ils étaient les amis des pauvres, des opprimés, du peuple resté Saxon, qui les aimait à son tour sans réserve et sans arrière-pensée. . . . Tel était dans ses traits saillants le caractère des outlaws Anglo-Saxons du xiie siècle. Une vie inquiète dans les bois ou dans les marais, une haine bien franche contre les oppresseurs étrangers, barons, shériffs, ou évêques, une sympathie très vive pour les déshérités de toutes les classes ; et avec le temps, une sorte d'affection pour cette vie qu'ils n'ont point choisie, un amour naïf pour ce *bois vert* où ils étaient exilés. Il y a toute raison de croire que Robin Hood était, historiquement parlant, un homme comme ceux-là, partageant leurs habitudes, leurs inclinations, et leurs haines, maudit comme eux par les Normands de race dont Fordun s'est fait le dernier écho. Du reste, nous ne savons rien de plus précis sur sa vie ou son caractère." (pp. 6-8.)

Mr. Barry supposes that songs, such as those which Ingulf mentions as having been sung in the public ways in honour of the popular hero Hereward, were the original form of the Robin Hood ballads.

We think, however, that Mr. Barry has gone too far. There is no other ground but bare conjecture for supposing the personage named Robin Hood to have been actually one of the Saxons outlawed by their opposition to the Normans, and there are many reasons for adopting a contrary opinion. Yet it is very possible that, when the sudden change from Saxon to Norman rule was no longer felt, and when the deeds of these Saxon heroes began to be forgotten, the Robin Hood cycle, let it have originated where it may, gradually succeeded to, and took the place of, the ballads which celebrated Hereward and Waltheof.

Still, however, supposing the Robin Hood cycle to have succeeded the ballads which celebrated the last Saxon heroes, we have made no progress towards a discovery of the original personage who had become its hero. Was he the representative of some northern chieftain whose actions had gained a place among the national myths, and who had become an object of popular superstition? Many circumstances join in making this supposition at the least extremely probable.

We know that the ballads of this cycle were intimately connected with the popular festival held at the beginning of May. Indeed, either express mention of it, or a vivid description of the season, in the older ballads, shows that the feats of the hero were generally performed during this month. Unfortunately, we cannot distinctly trace back further than the fifteenth century the history of these games, and their connexion with the name of Robin Hood. "Sir John Paston, in the time of king Edward IV. complaining of the ingratitude of his servants, mentions one who had promised never to desert him, 'and theruppon,' says he, 'I have kepyd hym thys iii. yer to pleye seynt Jorge, and Robyn Hod and the shryf of Notyngham, and now when I wolde have good horse, he is goon into Bernysdale, and I without a keeper.'" The allusion is evidently to some story or ballad which then existed (similar to that of Reynaud Grenlefe) where Robin in disguise had hired himself as a groom to the sheriff, and had afterwards stolen his horses. This is a very favorite stratagem in the Roman of Eustace le Moine, who, more than once, in disguise, carries away the horses of the count of Boulogne.

Ritson, from whom the above extract was taken, asserts that the May festival owed its origin to meetings for the

purpose of practising with the bow. There can be little doubt, however, that Ritson was wrong, that the archery was an addition to the festival, and that the latter was, in its earlier form among our Pagan forefathers, a religious celebration, though, like such festivals in general, it possessed a double character, that of a religious ceremony and of an opportunity for the performance of warlike games. With the changes which this festival experienced at different periods we are not well acquainted; but a circumstance has been preserved which seems to illustrate the subject, so far as regards the nature of the ceremony.

Adjoining to Cambridge there is a village called Barnwell, which was once celebrated for its abbey, and for the well which was enclosed within the abbey walls. The old chronicler of the monastery, whom Leland, if we remember right, read in its library, derived the name of the place from the Saxon *beorna wil*, which he interpreted, according to the acceptation in which the word *beorn* was taken in his days, *the well of the lads*, but which a few ages earlier would have signified *the well of the champions*. The story he tells in illustration of the name is this. From time immemorial it had been a custom for the young men and lads of the vicinity to assemble here at a particular period of the year, to perform gymnastic exercises and warlike games, and hence the well received its name. The circumstance of the meeting having been held at a well, proves that it had something religious in its character. After the entrance of the Normans, in addition to the games and festivities, it had become customary to hold there a market, and the festival seems to have taken the character of what we now call a wake or fair. The monastery

was founded in the reign of the first William, in a position nearer to the castle; but the place where the festival was held having been judged more convenient, and the Normans paying little respect to the popular prejudices of the Saxons, the second founder, in the following reign, built it in this new situation, and the fair was afterwards held in another spot. Perhaps it is still preserved in what is called the *Pot Fair*, which is held in the month of June. The name of the well was given to the monastery and to the village.*

Here we have an allusion to a festival similar in object, if not in the period of its celebration, to the May games of after ages. At such festivals the songs would take the character of the amusements on the occasion, and would most likely celebrate warlike deeds—perhaps the myths of the patron whom superstition supposed to preside over them. As the character of the exercises changed, the attributes of this patron would change also; and he who was once celebrated as working wonders with his good

* The original chartulary of Barnwell, where the origin of the name of the well is thus told, is preserved in the British Museum:—"Impetravit ille egregius Paganus Peverel a rege Henrico locum quendam extra burgum Cantebrigiæ, a magna platea usque in riveriam Cantebrigiæ se extendentem, et amœnitate situs loci satis delectabilem. Porro de illius loci medio fonticuli satis puri et vividi emanabant, Anglice *barnewelle*, id est *fontes puerorum*, eo tempore appellati, eo quod pueri et adolescentes semel per annum in vigiliis scilicet Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptistæ, illic convenientes, more Anglorum luctamina et alia ludicria exercebant puerilia, et cantilenis et musicis instrumentis sibi invicem applaudebant. Unde propter turbam puerorum et puellarum illic concurrentium et ludentium, mos inolevit ut in eodem die illic conveniret negociandi gratia turba vendentium et ementium," &c. (*MS. Harl.* 3601. *fol.* 12. v°.)

axe or his elf-made sword, might afterwards assume the character of a skilful bowman. The scene of his actions would likewise change—and the person whose weapons were the bane of dragons and giants, who sought them in the wildernesses they infested, might become the enemy only of the sheriff and his officers under the "grene-wode lefe." As the original character became unintelligible to the peasantry, amongst whom all these changes were taking place, the name also might run into one more popular, and the hero of Saxon story might be brought to assume the simple title, which every one would understand, of *Robin with the Hood*. That this was a part of his dress we are assured by a passage of one of the older ballads already quoted:—

> "Robyn dyde adowne his *hode*,
> The monk whan that he see."

An instance of a similar name having been derived from an apparently similar circumstance, has been often pointed out in the German familiar spirit *Hudekin*.

We are, however, not opposed to the conjecture which has been made, that the name Robin Hood is but a corruption of Robin of the Wood, because we find analogies in other languages. The name of Witikind, the famous opponent of Charlemagne, who always fled before his sight, concealed himself in the forests, and returned again in his absence, is no more than *witu chint*, in old High Dutch, and signifies the *son of the wood*, an appellation which he could never have received at his birth, since it denotes an exile or outlaw. Indeed, the name Witikind, though such a person seems to have existed, appears to be the representative of all the defenders of his country

against the invaders. The old Norse expressions *skoggangr* and *skogarmadr*, which denote an outlaw, are literally *one who goes in the woods, a man of the woods*, as is *urdarmadr, one who hides himself among the rocks.* They correspond to the Anglo-Saxon *weald-genga.* The Servians have a remarkable expression, *schuma ti mati*, the wood be thy mother, that is, save thyself by flight, hide thyself in the wood. (See Dr. Grimm's *Deutsche Rechts Alterthümer*, p. 733.) Jamieson has printed a modern ballad which, evidently to account for the name of our hero, supposing it to be Robin of the Wood, makes him the offspring of a baron's daughter, who had been gotten with child by her father's butler, and who had been compelled to make the wild wood the scene of Robin's birth. The name, however, is easily explained, when we know that at least as early as the fourteenth century Robin Hood had become the representative of the English outlaws. In the tale of *Gamelin*, one of the oldest of the supposititious works of Chaucer,—which has evidently some connexion with the Robin Hood cycle, and the name too bears a great resemblance to that of Gandeleyn which has already occurred—the outlaw seeks the woods as a shelter from the oppressions of his own kindred.

It is rather a remarkable confirmation of the northern origin of Robin Hood, that one circumstance of an early ballad of the cycle, (*Adam Bell, Clym of the Clough*, and *William of Cloudeslee*), when the latter yeoman shoots the apple off his son's head, is known to be a northern story, and is related by the historian Saxo.

One of the strongest proofs, perhaps, of the mythic character of Robin Hood, is the connexion of his name with mounds and stones, such as our peasantry always attri-

buted to the fairies of their popular superstition. A tumulus was generally the habitation of the underground people, a well or a ruin was the chosen place of their gambols, and a spot which exhibits marks of some violent natural convulsion was a testimony of their vengeance. These were the dwarfs of the northern mythology; but the giants of the same creed left also marks of their presence in the loose masess of stone which in their anger or in their playfulness, they had thrown to immense distances, and in others, more regularly placed, which had once served to mark the length of their steps.

Sometimes our hero is identified with the dwarfs of the popular creed. The barrows in the neighbourhood of Whitby and Guisbrough bear his name, and the peasantry have created a story that they were the buts where he placed his marks. A large tumulus we know well in our own county, near Ludlow in Shropshire, which is also called Robin Hood's But, and which affords us a curious instance how new stories were often invented to account for a name whose original import was forgotten. The circumstances, too, in this case prove that the story was of late invention. The barrow, as regarded superstitiously, had borne the name of Robin Hood. On the roof of one of the chancels of the church of Ludlow, which is called *Fletchers' chancel*, as having been, when "the strength of England stood upon archery," the place where the fletchers held their meetings, and which is distant from the aforesaid barrow two miles or two miles and a half, there stands an iron arrow as the sign of their craft. The imagination of the people of the place, after archery and fletchers had been forgotten, and when Robin Hood was known only as an outlaw and a bowman, made a connexion between the

barrow (from its name) and the chancel (from the arrow on its roof), and a tale was invented how the outlaw once stood upon the former and took aim at the weathercock on the church steeple, but the distance being a little too great, the arrow fell short of its mark and remained up to the present day on the roof of the chancel. Near Gloucester also, and near Castleton in Derbyshire, are Robin Hood's hills. In Lancashire, in Yorkshire, and in Nottinghamshire, there are wells which bear his name, and that in Lancashire is surrounded by places which have been long occupied by the fairies. It may also be noted as a curious circumstance, proving the antiquity of this connexion of the outlaw with these objects of popular superstition, as having been carried by the English settlers into Ireland, that Little John has his hill near Dublin.

At other times Robin Hood figures as one of the giants. Blackstone Edge in Lancashire, as we learn from Roby's *Lancashire Legends*, is called Robin Hood's bed or Robin Hood's chair. On a black moor called Monstone Edge, is a huge moor-stone or outlier, which, though part of it has been broken off and removed, still retains the name of Monstone; it is said to have been quoited thither by Robin Hood from his bed on the top of Blackstone Edge, about six miles off. After striking the mark aimed at, the stone bounded off a few hundred yards, and settled where it now stands. A heap of old ruins at Kenchester, the site of the Roman Ariconium, was in Leland's time called the King of Fairies' *chair*, and King Arthur has many a *chair* and *bed* in Wales and Cornwall. Near Halifax in Yorkshire is an immense stone, supposed to be a druidical monument, which is called Robin Hood's pennystone, and which is said to be the stone with which he amused him-

self, by throwing it at a distant mark. Another stone in the same parish, weighing several tons, is said by the peasantry to have been thrown by him from an adjoining hill with his spade as he was digging; "everything of the marvellous kind," as saith Watson, the historian of Halifax, "being here attributed to Robin Hood, as it is in Cornwall to king Arthur." Gunton, in his history of Peterborough, mentions two long stones in a field in Suffolk, which were said by tradition to be the draught of arrows from Alwalton churchyard, shot thither by Robin Hood and Little John.

The legends of the peasantry are the shadows of a very remote antiquity, and in them we may place our trust with much confidence on a subject like the present. They enable us to place our Robin Hood with tolerable certainty among the personages of the early mythology of the Teutonic peoples.

ESSAY XVIII.

THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND BY THE ANGLO-NORMANS.

IT has long been known that there existed, among the manuscripts of the archiepiscopal palace at Lambeth, a most valuable document, though unfortunately imperfect, on the English conquest of Ireland, written apparently at the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century, and therefore not long after the important event which it commemorates, in Norman-French verse, by a poet or historian—we may call him which we will—who had received the history from the mouth of one who had himself been intimately engaged in the expedition; and who was no less a person than Maurice Regan, interpreter to Dermod mac Murrough, the king of Leinster.

Bound up in the same volume with the manuscript of which we speak, is a prose abstract of this poem by Sir George Carew, who was lord president of Munster in the reign of Elizabeth, and who was himself a descendant of the Robert fitz Stephen who acts so prominent a part in the history. Of the original manuscript, which is apparently a somewhat later transcript of the poem, no use has hitherto been made by our historians; probably, because

it was difficult of access and of translation. But Walter Harris, in 1747, published in his *Hibernica* the abstract which had been made by Carew; and this has been ever since quoted in place of the original, and all its errors and misrepresentations repeated: and no wonder if it be full of them, for we are sure that its author could seldom translate the words of the poem.

The story which our poet gives us confirms, most remarkably, the relation of Giraldus, which had been written previously; although, as independent histories, each contains many circumstances not mentioned by the other. We are inclined to suppose that Maurice Regan was not the bard's sole authority, and it is probable that from him the recital was obtained in his old age; for, in confirmation of what he says, he commonly appeals to the authority of the *old* people who witnessed it. Thus, after speaking of the death of Robert de Quency, he says:

"Une fille pur vers aveit
Robert, qui tant gentils esteit,
De sa espuse veraiment,
Solum le anciene gent."

And again, speaking of the Irish barons who, in their way through England to Normandy, had joined in putting down the rebellion of the earl of Leicester with the Scots:

"Et de Leycestre lors li quens,
Solum li dist des anciens,
Sur sun seignur esteit turné
Et Flemenges aveit mené."

We should, probably, have known more of the poet and of his authorities, had we the whole of his proeme, the

earlier part of which is, unfortunately, lost, with a leaf of the manuscript; yet what remains is far from authorising the assertion of all those who have quoted it through Sir George Carew's abstract, that the history was originally written by Maurice Regan himself. For the sake of showing how ill Sir George read and interpreted his text, we will give the first eleven lines as he has quoted and translated them from the manuscript, and again as they actually stand in the manuscript itself, and as they ought to be translated. We quote from the octavo edition of Harris's *Hibernica*, published in 1770. Perhaps some of the errors in this instance must be laid to the charge of the editor.*

Sir George Carew's text and version.	*The text from the MS., with our version.*
	* * *
" Parsoen demande Latinner	" Parsoen demeine latinier,
L'moi conta de sim historie	Que moi conta de lui l'estorie,

* We will add one instance of the utter incompetency of Sir George Carew to give the sense even of his original. We are told by the former that "The expedition of Ossery being determined, O'Brien returned to Limerick, and the erle to Fernes, where he remained eight days; in which time Murrough O'Byrne (who evermore had been a traitor unto king Dermod) was brought prisoner unto hym, immediately beheaded, and his body cast to the dogs; *and with him a son of Daniel Kevanagh was executed;*" on which Harris naturally enough observes in a note, "It does not appear anywhere what the offence of Daniel Kavenagh's son was, that the loyalty and good services of the father could not atone for him." In fact the poem says as distinctly as possible that it was a son of Morrough who was taken by Donald Kevanagh and executed with his father:

"E Dovenald Kevenāth un sun fiz
Aveit al cunte mené e pris."

Dunt far ici la memorie.	Dunt faz içi la memorie.
Morice Regan iret celui,	Morice Regan iert celui,
Buche a buche par la alui	Buche à buche parla à lui
Ri cest gest endita	Ki cest jest endita,
Lestorie de lui me mostra.	L'estorie de lui me mostra.
Jeil Morice iret Latinner	Icil Morice iert latinier
Al rei re Murcher.	Al rei Dermot, ke mult l'out cher.
Ici lirrai del bachelle	Içi lirrai del bachéier,
Del rei Dermod, vous voil conter."	Del rei Dermod vus voil conter."
	* * *
At his own desire, the Interpreter	—By his own interpreter,
To me related his history,	Who related to me the history of him,
Which I here commit to memory.	Of which I here make memorial.
Maurice Regan was the man,	Maurice Regan was he,
Who face to face indited to me	Mouth to mouth he spoke to him
These actions of the king,	Who endited this history,
And of himself showed me this history.	He showed me the history of him.
This Maurice was interpreter	This Maurice was interpreter
To the king, king Murcher.	To king Dermod, who loved him much.
These things this batchellor	Here I will read of the bachelor [*i. e. the king*];
Of king Dermod read to me:	Of king Dermod I will tell you."
This is his story."	

We see at once in this translation how arose the error that Regan had written the history. An edition of the text of this poem, so valuable for the light it throws on an interesting period of history, has since been given to the public.* Few events have had the good fortune to be re-

* Norman-French Metrical History of the Conquest of Ireland in the Twelfth Century, edited from a manuscript in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth. By Francisque Michel. London, Pickering.

corded by two contemporaries so well fitted for the task as Giraldus and Maurice Regan—one closely related to the heroes (for heroes we may truly call them) who performed the enterprise; the other, an immediate agent of the native chieftain in whose aid it was performed. For our own part, we feel an entire conviction of the candour of the Welshman, in the use of the materials he had collected for his history. The testimony of the Irishman is delivered with too much simplicity to allow us to suspect him of intentional misrepresentations.

It happens, unfortunately, that the rolls of the reign of the second Henry are nearly all lost. In the reign of John they first begin to be numerous, and they then throw great light upon Irish history. The charter-rolls of this reign contain the confirmations of most of the grants of land made to the first conquerors.

In spite of all that has been advanced to the contrary, we still continue to look upon the ancient Irish as a wild and barbarous people. Such were they found when the Romans entered Britain; such were they in the time of the Saxons; and their character was not changed for the better when the Anglo-Normans succeeded in establishing themselves in the isle. For ages they had infested, by their piratical depredations, the coasts of England and Wales. When, during the days of Saxon rule, a rebellious noble had been defeated in his projects, he fled immediately to Ireland to recruit his strength; and at its conquest at the end of the twelfth century, the country was full of English slaves, who had been purloined from their homes. Such being the case, we need not wonder if our kings sometimes contemplated the conquest of Ireland as a matter of policy; and it appears from the Saxon Chronicle,

that William the Conqueror had himself formed the design of reducing it to a dependence upon the English crown. The passage, from its brevity, and from the late and bad Saxon in which it is written, is rather obscure; the sense seems to be, that if the king had lived two years longer he would have subdued Ireland, and that, by the renown of his valour, without even striking a blow (and gif he moste þa gyt twa gear libban, he hæfde Yrlande mid his werscípe ge-wunnon, and wiš-utan ælcon wæpnon.)

A historian of the twelfth century characterizes the Irish of his time as a people so little accustomed to peace and quiet, that they only slackened in their depredations upon others to pursue more inveterately their internal dissensions. In the latter half of this century, the petty king of Leinster was Dermod mac Murrough, who is described by historians as a bold and valiant prince, but proud and restless; as little liked by his neighbours for his encroachments upon their rights, as he was agreeable to his own subjects by his overbearing tyranny. He had reduced to the condition of tributaries several of the petty kingdoms which bordered on his own, among which was that of Meath; and in one of his wars he had carried with him to Leinster, O'Karrel, the son of the king of "Yriel." A district nearly adjoining to the kingdom of Dermod, which our Anglo-Norman poem calls Leschoin, and which Harris, in his *Hibernica*, explains by Leitrim, and Giraldus by Meath, was governed during this same period by king O'Rourk, whose residence appears to have been at "Tirbrun," in a wild and woody district. The wife of O'Rourk was the daughter of Melaghlin mac Coleman, king of Meath, who was herself amorous of the king of Leinster. The love between the lady and Dermod seems to have been

mutual, though our poem insinuates that the object of the latter in seducing O'Rourk's wife was to revenge the disgrace which his people had suffered at "Lechunthe;" where it would appear that the people of O'Rourk had made a hostile incursion into Leinster. In this uncivilised age, when an Irishman left his home for a short period, it seems to have been a common and necessary precaution to hide his wife in some corner during his absence. King O'Rourk selected for this purpose a secret place, apparently not far from Tirbrun, which Giraldus calls "insula quædam Mediæ"—a certain island in Meath; but his queen had already yielded to the importunities of Dermod. She invited him to enter "Lethcoin," with a sufficient force, during the absence of her husband, and at Tirbrun he was encountered by her messenger, with information of the place of her concealment; whence—"rapta," as Giraldus has it, "quia et rapi voluit"—she was carried away by Dermod to Ferns.

The first thought of O'Rourk, when he received intelligence of the violence which had been done to him by Dermod, was of revenge. He carried his complaint to the king of Connaught, who was then looked upon as the superior monarch over all Ireland, and who immediately espoused his cause; and, at his instigation, all the chiefs who were tributary to Dermod deserted their superior lord. Among these were the king of Ossory, to whom was promised Dermod's kingdom of Leinster, after the expulsion of its present sovereign; Melaghlin (*Malathlin,*) the king of Meath; Hasculf mac Turkil, the Danish king of Dublin; and Murrough O'Brien (by Carew translated O'Byrne,) whom the author of our poem stigmatises as "un mal félun," or, as we might say in simple English, a singu-

larly great scoundrel. It would appear, indeed, that the king of Leinster had put more than ordinary confidence in O'Brien. When all his other friends had deserted him, he seems still to have clung to the hope that he would return to his allegiance, and therefore he felt the more sensibly his ingratitude and perfidy. Dermod had taken refuge in the city of Ferns, where was his paramour, and where he was harboured, we are told, in an abbey of St. Mary's. Here he resolved to make a last attempt to obtain an interview with O'Brien, and for that purpose had recourse to a stratagem. Disguised in the long robe of a monk, which he had borrowed of the abbot of St. Mary's, and which concealed his head and body, and even his feet, he made his way in safety to O'Brien's residence; but here again the king was unsuccessful. O'Brien refused to hold any parley with him, loaded him with reproaches and threats, and retreated into the woods.

Deserted by those in whom he put his trust, his party at home too weak to make head against his enemies, the king of Leinster was driven to seek aid amongst strangers. He left the harbour of "Corkeran," attended by Awelif O'Kinad, and, according to the recital of Maurice Regan (who, we suspect, must have been guilty of exaggeration, or the writer of the manuscript of error,) with more than sixty ships. With a favorable wind he soon reached Bristol, where, with his followers, and, according to the common report, with the wife of king O'Rourk, he was lodged in the house of Robert Harding, at St. Austin's. Thence, after a short stay, he passed through Normandy, into Aquitaine, where he found the king of England, Henry II, who listened with attention to his complaint, and promised him assistance as soon as possible. Dermod

returned to Bristol with the royal letters to Robert Harding, his former host, ordering him to furnish the refugees with every necessary during their residence there; and, according to Giraldus, with the king's letters patent, authorising his subjects to assist him in recovering his kingdom. At Bristol he made a stay of nearly a month; but at length, despairing of any immediate aid from the king, and with the hope of alluring private adventurers to join his standard, he proclaimed rewards of extensive possessions in Ireland to all those who would be instrumental in the recovery of his lost territory. The liberality of his promises quickly attracted the attention of Richard fitz Gilbert, surnamed Strongbow, earl of Strigul.

Earl Richard was descended from a great and noble family, being the son and heir of Gilbert earl of Pembroke, the grandson of that Richard de Clare who had distinguished himself so highly in the memorable battle of Hastings. He is described as a man liberal and courteous, ever ready to listen to the counsel of his friends, cautious in the cabinet, yet bold and resolute in the field. In time of peace he was distinguished by his gentle bearing, having more of the freedom of the soldier than the haughtiness of a chieftain; but in war he showed more of the commander than the soldier, less of the indiscriminate daring of the latter than of the firm and cool valour of the former. Such was Strongbow, if we believe his contemporaries. By some means or other he had lost, we are told, most of his paternal possessions. To support his character and rank, it appears that he had been obliged to borrow, probably of the Jews, who in those days were the grand usurers; and at the time when Dermod was seeking private adventurers for the invasion of Leinster,

Strongbow was driven, as much by his own limited fortune as by the clamorous importunities of his creditors, to listen to his proposals. The Irish king offered him his daughter in marriage, and, with her, the kingdom after his death; and the earl promised to come to his assistance at the first approach of spring.

From Bristol, Dermod passed over into Wales, and was honorably received by the Welsh king, Rhys ap Gruffydh, and by the bishop of the see, at St. David's, where he remained two or three days, until ships were procured to carry him over to Ireland. At St. David's he became accidentally acquainted with one who was to play an active and prominent part in the events which followed. This was Robert fitz Stephen, who had been treacherously arrested and imprisoned by his kinsman, the Welsh king, because he would not join the latter in rebellion against his sovereign, the king of England. At the intercession of Dermod and his half-brothers, the bishop of St. David's and Maurice fitz Gerald, it was agreed that he should be liberated, on condition of joining in the Irish expedition in company with Maurice; and it was stipulated that, in return for their services, Dermod should give in fee to the two brothers the city of Wexford, with the two adjacent *cantreds*, or hundreds. They also promised to sail for Ireland at the opening of spring. The Irish king seems to have had still a few faithful adherents in his own country, and he was naturally anxious to return thither as soon as he had secured assistance from England. He accordingly left St. David's in August 1168, with a small number of attendants, and arrived safely at Ferns; where he was privately, but honorably, received by the clergy of the place, and where he remained during the winter.

According to the Norman rhymer, Dermod was attended in his voyage by a small party of English, led by a Pembrokeshire knight, Richard fitz Godobert; but finding, perhaps, on his arrival, his own party in Ireland much weaker than he had expected, and thinking that so small a body of foreigners would be rather an impediment than an aid, he seems to have dismissed them; and he sent to Wales his secretary, Maurice Regan, to hasten the preparations of Fitz Stephen, and to allure others to his standard by offers of land and money.

We may well admire the circumstance of one family, by the mother's side, having produced so many great and brave men as were associated together in the first invasion of Ireland. Nesta, or Nest, the daughter of Gruffydh ap Rhys, king of South Wales (the father of the Rhys who was king when Dermod visited St. David's,) became the concubine of Henry I of England, and by him bore a son named Henry, whose sons were Meiler fitz Henry and Robert fitz Henry. She afterwards married Gerald of Windsor, who was constable of Pembroke, and by him she had three sons: William, who was the father of Raymund le Gros; Maurice fitz Gerald; and David, who was bishop of St. David's. Her second husband was Stephen, the constable of Aberteivi, or Cardigan, by whom she had Robert fitz Stephen. A daughter of this same Nesta married William de Barri of Pembrokeshire, by whom she had four sons, Robert, Philip, Walter, and Giraldus the historian of the enterprise.

As the spring approached, Robert fitz Stephen made himself ready for the voyage. In the month of May, 1169, his little armament of three ships arrived at the Banne; his army consisting of a hundred and thirty

knights, his own kinsmen and retainers, with sixty other men of arms, and about three hundred chosen Welsh archers on foot. Among the more eminent of his companions in arms—the "chevalers de grant pris" of the poem—were Meiler fitz Henry, Miles fitz David, who was the son of the bishop of St. David's, and Henry de Montmaurice, a soldier of fortune, who had come on the part of earl Strongbow. The day following, at the same place, arrived Maurice de Prendergast, who had set sail from Milford Haven with two ships, attended by ten knights and a considerable number of archers.

In that part of Ireland which was first occupied by the English, the older Irish names seem in many instances to have been changed and forgotten; and we have now a difficulty in identifying the places which are mentioned in the recitals of Giraldus and of Maurice Regan. The place where Fitz Stephen's armament landed, then called simply the Banne, is by tradition identified with the small peninsula on the coast of Wexford, forming the promontory now called Baganbun. The headland called Baganbun, consisting altogether of about thirty acres, forms a bold projection towards the Welsh coast. On one side of the greater promontory is a lesser one, stretching out to the east, about two hundred yards long and seventy broad, accessible only at its extreme point; beyond which rises a large, high, insulated rock, which forms a breakwater to the surf on the point, and which is imperfectly joined to the main-land by several smaller rocks that just appear above water, and are described as forming a kind of causeway to the point of the promontory itself. Here tradition says that Fitz Stephen ran in his ships, mooring them under protection of

the larger rock, and landing his men by means of the low ridge. The cut between the last of these rocks, across which he is said to have sprung, is now popularly called *Fitz Stephen's Stride*. The adventurers are supposed to have first occupied the esplanade of the smaller peninsula, and there still remain distinct traces of the hasty fortifications which are said to have been thrown up. On the isthmus which connects the lesser peninsula with the greater, a deep fosse, about seventy yards long, extends from side to side; which was bounded on each edge by high mounds of earth, and in the centre covered by a half-moon bastion, twenty yards in circumference. On each side of this bastion may be traced passages through the fosse, and the bastion itself is connected with the esplanade by a mound of earth. This bastion commanded the approaches, and overlooked "all the ground in the vicinity." Some few years ago, on turning up the soil around the edge of the esplanade, were discovered the remains of fires, at regular intervals, on the edge of the precipices; which are supposed to have been the watch-fires of the videttes who were stationed around the encampment. In the middle is an oblong hollow space, like the foundations of a house, which is popularly called *Fitz Stephen's Tent*. The neck, which joins the greater promontory with the main-land, is also defended by a double fosse, deep and broad, stretching across the whole breadth, a space of two hundred and fifty yards.

Such is the place pointed out by tradition as the first Irish ground occupied by Fitz Stephen. Tradition, however, as we have ourselves had too many reasons for knowing, is but an erring monitor; and in the present instance we are not inclined to put much faith in it. The

position and form of the promontory of Baganbun seems to answer better to the description of the place of landing of the gallant Raymund, and to the fortifications which he raised there; and we think it more probable that Fitz Stephen landed at Bannow, a point, certainly, more convenient for the intended expedition against Wexford. Giraldus calls the place *Insula Banniensis* (or, as the printed text has it, *Banuensis,*) and, as the sea has made such changes on this spot as to have buried a whole town, it may in his time have been a peninsular promontory.

There is, indeed, no reason for supposing that Fitz Stephen took much trouble to fortify the place of his landing; the Norman poem tells us that he encamped on the sea-shore, and Giraldus gives us clearly to understand that his position was by no means strong, though the insular form of the place gave it a certain degree of security. Dermod was at Ferns, in expectation of their arrival, the first intelligence of which raised the hopes of his friends, and caused them openly to join his standard; and, having previously despatched his natural son, Donald Kavenagh, to announce his approach, he hastened to join and welcome the English adventurers, bringing with him about five hundred men. The king rested that night with Fitz Stephen, in his encampment on the beach, and the next morning they marched with their little army towards Wexford.

The people of Wexford, who prided themselves much upon their valour and former exploits, boldly sallied forth to meet the enemy. Their number was about two thousand; but they were unaccustomed to the sight of knights mounted and clad in armour, such as were the men who now presented themselves to their view; and, having first

burnt the suburbs, they hastily retreated within their walls. The English advanced directly to attack the town, which was obstinately defended. Among the first who mounted the wall was Robert de Barri, the elder brother of the historian Giraldus; a large stone from the besieged struck him on the helmet; he fell headlong into the fosse, and was with difficulty dragged out by his companions: many others of the assailants were severely hurt, and Fitz Stephen was compelled to withdraw his men with the loss of eighteen, whilst of the besieged only three were killed. The English hastened from the town to the harbour, where they burnt the shipping; and they then prepared for a renewal of the attack the next morning. But the people of Wexford, although they had repelled the first assault with little loss to themselves, were fearful of the final result; they anticipated a second by offers of capitulation; and the morning when this assault should have been made, they gave their hostages, and renewed their allegiance to Dermod. The English immediately entered the town, which, according to previous agreement, was delivered, with its territory, to Fitz Stephen; and the Irish king granted, at the same time, to Hervy de Montmaurice the two cantreds bordering on the sea between Wexford and Waterford.

After a stay of three weeks at Ferns, Dermod, with his new allies, set out for the invasion of Ossory; whose king, Donald, or, as he is called by the rimer, Mac Donthid (perhaps, Mac Donald) was obnoxious to him, no less for former injuries than for his late pretensions to the kingdom of Leinster. The invasion of a district defended, like Ossory, by its bogs, woods, and hills, was a bold undertaking; but the fall of Wexford had strengthened the party of Dermod; some turned to what appeared sud-

denly to be a thriving cause; the hope of plunder attracted many; and, in addition to his English associates, he was now at the head of an army of three thousand Irish. The king of Ossory, with five thousand Irish, had occupied a difficult pass, by which it was necessary that Dermod should enter his territory; there he had stationed his men behind strong entrenchments, consisting of three large and deep fosses, with a hedge behind them. When the army of Dermod approached the defile, the English rushed forwards to attack the entrenchments of the Ossorians; the struggle was prolonged from morning till evening, when, after much loss on both sides, the English knights burst through the hedge and put their opponents to flight, and Dermod's Irish spread themselves over the country to rob and destroy.

The king of Ossory and his army, after their defeat, had taken shelter in the woods, whence, on the return of the invaders, they again assembled, to harass them in their retreat. The Irish who were with Dermod, and who appear to have been chiefly the men of Hy-Kinsellagh, were placed under the command of his natural son, Donald Kavenagh; and the king himself marched with the English, who, as in entering the hostile country they were in the advance, now in leaving it held the rear. Donald Kavenagh soon approached a dangerous defile—it was a place where, in his wars with the people of Ossory, Dermod had been three times defeated; and his Irish, expecting now a similar disaster, fled precipitately to the woods leaving their leader with only forty-three men to await the enemy. The king of Ossory, taking advantage of this sudden flight, hastened with seventeen hundred Irish to attack the English, who were not much more than three

hundred men. The latter were just passing the bottom of a little vale, and they feared an attack from the Irish in so critical a position; the more so, as they knew them to be "a people as swift as the wind." Maurice de Prendergast urged his companions to keep close together, and pass firmly and deliberately the vale, until, having reached better ground, they might turn upon their pursuers; and, at his suggestion, a party of archers were placed in ambush among the brushwood. The Irish passed the ambush, but the archers, terrified by their numbers, dared not show themselves. Soon, however, the English reached better ground; they shouted their cry of "St. David!" and turned round upon the Ossorians, who, not defended by armour like their opponents, were quickly cut down or put to flight. The prowess of Meiler fitz Henry was everywhere conspicuous: Giraldus joins with his name that of Robert de Barri. The historian often dwells upon the ambitious valour of his cousin Meiler, and the modest bravery of his brother Robert.

When the Irish of Dermod's party, who had sought shelter in the woods on the first approach of the enemy, saw the result of the battle, they rushed from their places of concealment, and fell upon the rear of the fugitives. With their axes, the peculiar weapon of these wild warriors, they cut off the heads of those who had been slain by the English or by themselves; and more than two hundred heads were thus laid at the feet of Dermod. Giraldus has preserved an anecdote, strikingly characteristic of the savage manners of the Irish of this period. Among the heads which were thrown on the ground before him, Dermod recognized one as that of a person who had been peculiarly obnoxious to him: as he danced exult-

ingly among the heads of his foes, he suddenly seized upon this one, raised it by the ears to his mouth, and with a barbarous joy, bit off the nose and part of the lips.

The victors proceeded the same night to the town of Fethelin, to which there was a good and direct road, carrying with them their wounded; and the day following they returned to Ferns, where the Irish from most of the districts which had been subject to the king of Leinster, terrified by the reports which were already spread abroad of the valour of the English, came in and gave hostages for their allegiance. The king of Ossory, however, as well as Mac Kelan, the king of Offelan, or the district about Nass, and Hasculf mac Turkil, the king of Dublin, were not among the number. The next expedition of Dermod and his English was against Mac Kelan. Offelan was soon plundered and laid waste, and the booty carried to Ferns: and a similar enterprise carried them through Hy-Kinsellagh to Glendalough and the territory of O'Tool. After again resting some eight days at Ferns, Dermod, resolving if possible to reduce king Donald to subjection, prepared for a second invasion of Ossory. Donald Kavenagh marched first, at the head of five thousand Irish; he was followed by the men of Wexford, who were objects of suspicion to the king and the English, and who were therefore placed in a separate division and closely watched; and in another division came Dermod himself, with the English.

Thus Dermod and his army wandered across the country, making, as it would appear, a somewhat circuitous route into Ossory; till one night they came to Fothard or Fethard, where the king encamped with the English on the "water of Mac Burtin," according to Giraldus, in and about an old ruined fort. Here it was that, during the night, they

were visited by that singular "phantasm" which is related by both historians; and which, Giraldus informs us, was of no uncommon occurrence during the Irish wars. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, they saw rushing upon them, from every side, a vast army. The greater part of the Irish who were encamped in the immediate neighbourhood, struck with terror at this sudden attack, fled precipitately to the woods and bogs, leaving Meiler fitz Henry and Robert de Barri, who, it seems, were with them, and who immediately hastened to the encampment of Fitz Stephen. They found the English in great alarm; for they, led by their suspicions, supposed it to be the Wexford men who had betrayed them, and who had come upon them unawares. Randolf fitz Ralf was on the watch, and first saw the imaginary assailants. In an instant he shouted the war-cry, "St. David!" drew his sword, and rushed towards the enemy. A soldier in armour advanced towards him, but a blow of Randolf's sword brought him on his knees: it was one of his fellow-watchmen. The English had now time to discover their mistake; the phantasm by degrees disappeared, and passed by the camp of the Wexford men, who, equally suspicious of the others, thought they saw in it a treacherous attack by the English.

The following morning the army was again put in order, and marched forwards in search of the king of Ossory. The latter had seized upon the pass of Athethur, or Hathedur, which he had defended by a broad and deep fosse, and a hedge of hurdles. At length king Dermod approached the pass; it was near nightfall; and between his army and Athethur flowed a large river, on whose banks he encamped. The next morning, his whole army passed the river without opposition, and the Wexford men were appointed to attack

the entrenchments. Three successive days they advanced valiantly to the assault, and were as often driven back by the Ossorians; till, on the third day, the English, marching up as the Irish retreated, soon burst through the hedge sword in hand, and as quickly drove the men of king Donald from their position, and again laid open the kingdom of Ossory to the ravages of Dermod and his Irish, who returned to Ferns laden with the spoils. The king of Ossory fled into Tipperary, through the district of Wenenath (Hy-Nenath?), and thence to "Bertun."

The successes of Dermod and the foreigners whom he had brought into the island became now a subject of serious apprehension to the other chieftains throughout Ireland; and Rory O'Connor, the king of Connaught, and "monarch" of the whole isle, summoned together the inferior kings, who entered Leinster with a numerous army, resolved to expel the intruders at once from the land. Dermod had received early intelligence of the storm which threatened him. Many of his Irish followers deserted him in his time of need, and not feeling himself strong enough to face such an enemy in the field, he retreated with the English to a strong position near Ferns, surrounded by bogs and water, thick woods, and precipitous mountains. This place, almost inaccessible by its natural character, Fitz Stephen rendered impregnable, by digging deep pits and ditches over the ground by which the entrance must be approached, and by narrowing the entrance and plashing the wood with trees that his men had cut down. O'Connor first sent a messenger to Dermod, offering to confirm to him the peaceful possession of all his ancient kingdom of Leinster, on condition of the immediate dismission of the English allies. On Dermod's refusal to

accede to these terms, the king of Connaught made some slight demonstrations of hostility; but negotiations were soon again renewed. O'Connor was well aware of the strength of Dermod's position, and the latter was willing, on any reasonable terms, to avert for the present the wrath of the king of Connaught. A treaty was therefore made, by which the possession of Leinster was secured to Dermod, on condition of his doing homage to O'Connor as his superior lord; and he delivered, as an hostage for his performance of the terms of the treaty, one of his younger sons, named "Cnuth." Giraldus assures us, that there was also a secret treaty between the two kings, whereby Dermod bound himself to receive no more English into his service, and to dismiss those who were with him as soon as he had entirely reduced his rebellious dependents.

Be this as it may, king Dermod became so proud and overbearing by his successes, that he appears to have given umbrage even to his English allies, to whose exertions he owed them. Maurice de Prendergast, with his followers, to the number of two hundred, resolved to return home, and, taking their leave of the king, they marched towards Wexford; where, however, Dermod had already dispatched orders to hinder their departure. Enraged at Dermod's ingratitude, and unable to leave the country, Maurice proffered his services to the king of Ossory, who joyfully accepted them, and agreed to meet him at Tech-Moylin. Maurice made his way in safety to this place, in spite of the opposition of Donald Kavenagh, who had thrown himself in the way with five hundred men: on the third day after his arrival the king came to him, according to agreement; each took oath of fidelity to the other, and they entered Ossory in company. With the aid of his new

ally, the king of Ossory was soon enabled to make reprisals upon Dermod, and he suddenly invaded the territory of O'More, king of Leis (Queen's County), where his ravages were only arrested by the submission of O'More, who promised faithfully to deliver his hostages on an appointed day. But the wily king of Leis, while Donald and Maurice were quietly enjoying themselves, and waiting the day fixed for the delivery of the hostages, sent a messenger to king Dermod in Leinster, begging his aid against their common enemy.

During this time, the loss which Dermod had sustained by the defection of Maurice de Prendergast was repaired by a new arrival of English. Maurice fitz Gerald had landed at Wexford, attended by ten knights, with thirty horse and a hundred archers on foot, who were joyfully received by the king of Leinster. Immediately after their arrival came the messager of O'More; and, after a short consultation with the English barons, Dermod assembled his army, and made a hasty march towards Leis. This expedition had been concerted with such speed and secrecy, that it was only when Dermod was far advanced on the way that a spy brought to the king of Ossory the first intelligence of his approach. The latter felt himself unable to cope with Dermod's army, and, by the advice of Maurice de Prendergast, he hastened back into Ossory. The king of Leinster, after himself taking hostages of O'More, also returned to Ferns.

Maurice soon found, that the service of the king of Ossory was no less ungrateful than that of the king of Leinster. The presence of the foreigners was naturally enough a subject of jealousy to the natives, particularly in time of truce, when the latter were not gaining by their

exertions. As the English had, perhaps, been more provident than their Irish allies, the riches they had collected provoked their cupidity; and a plot was formed to surprise and murder Maurice and his men in their sleep, and to rob them of their share of the spoils. The conspirators even ventured to broach their project to the king, who, however, was honest enough to refuse all concurrence in it. In the meanwhile Maurice demanded and obtained leave of the latter to depart for Wales; and while the king moved on with his court (if the attendants of an Irish king at this time may be called a court) to Fertnegeragh, the former passed the night at Kilkenny, ready for departure the next morning on his march towards Waterford. He here learnt that the Ossorians, who had conspired against him, resolving to interrupt him in his march, had assembled to the number of two thousand men, and had seized upon a defile through which he would be obliged to pass, which they had fortified against him. In this unforeseen difficulty, a stratagem afforded the only hope of escape. The king of Ossory desired much to retain the English in his service, and Maurice now dispatched a message to his seneschal, announcing his willingness to comply with the king's desire. The king returned answer, that he would immediately repair to him at Kilkenny; the news was quickly spread over the country; the Ossorians left their position in the pass, and the English leaving Kilkenny secretly and by night, made a hasty march to Waterford. Thence, after a short stay and a squabble with the citizens, arising from the death of an Irishman who had been wounded by one of the English soldiers, and which was adjusted by the prudence and moderation of Maurice, they passed across the channel to Wales.

The hopes of Dermod were raised by the accession of Maurice fitz Gerald and his followers, who built themselves a stronghold upon a rock at Carrig, near Wexford: he had already conceived the idea of making himself master of Dublin, and of revenging severely upon its inhabitants the death of his father, whom they had murdered and buried along with a dog. The arrival of Fitz Gerald was itself a breach of the treaty which he is said to have made with the king of Connaught; and the latter, incensed at some petty depredations of Donald Kavenagh, invaded Leinster with a small army; but was defeated by the English, and returned to his own kingdom with disgrace.

Events were all this time ripening, which were destined to change entirely the face of affairs in Ireland. Earl Strongbow had not, as was expected, joined Dermod in the spring of 1169, but he had watched anxiously the proceedings of the first invaders, and was making large preparations for his Irish expedition. Dermod, eager for the attack upon Dublin, and in his insolence laying claim even to the kingdom of Connaught and the sovereignty of Ireland, dispatched messengers to England to hasten his departure. It was necessary, however, for Strongbow's purposes, to gain a distinct permission of the undertaking from the king of England. Historians are not agreed how far this permission was granted. Giraldus says, that the answer of the king was such that it might be interpreted in favour of Strongbow's projects; William of Newbury asserts, that Henry forbade the earl to meddle in the Irish affairs; but on this point, William's assertion ought probably to bear with it less authority than that of Giraldus. Be this as it may, in the summer of 1170 Strongbow was coasting the Welsh side of the Bristol channel on his way towards Ireland.

The precursor of Strongbow was Raymund, so celebrated in the after history by the surname, which his corpulency had procured him, of Raymund le Gros. With ten knights, and about seventy archers, he landed under shelter of a rock, which is called by Giraldus Dundunolf, and in the Norman poem, Domdonuil, situated on the southern coast of the county of Wexford, but nearer to Waterford than to that city, and answering exactly in its description and position to the little promontory of Baganbun. Here, among the rocks, he fortified his camp with earth and turfs, and was joined at his first arrival by Hervy de Montmaurice, whose lands must have been at no great distance from this place, and who brought with him three knights. With these Raymund's company amounted, perhaps, to nearly a hundred men. When the intelligence of their arrival reached Waterford, which was then governed by two Danish chieftains, Reginald and Smorch,* the citizens assembled in haste to drive away these new intruders. They were joined by the people of Ossory, and by Donald (or, as Giraldus calls him, Melaghlin) O'Felan, king of the Decies, and O'Rian, king of Hy-Drone; and a formidable army of about three thousand men, in three divisions, crossed the Suire, and hastened towards the camp at Dundunolf. Raymund and his English boldly sallied forth to meet their assailants, but, too few to hold the field against so numerous an army, they were quickly compelled to retire to their entrenchments, so closely pur-

* "Regenald e Smorch erent clamé
Les plus poanz de la cité." (*Norman Poem*, v. 1506.)
The latter of these names is not mentioned by Giraldus. But who were the two *Sytaracs* mentioned by him a little further on in the history?—"Captis igitur in turri Reginaldi duobus Sytaracis, et gladio sublatis."

sued by the Irish, that both parties were on the point of entering the camp together; when Raymund, turning round at the entrance, struck down with his sword several of the foremost of his pursuers, and the English, rallying at the nervous shout of their leader, rushed again upon the Irish, who, already fallen into disorder in the pursuit, and astonished by the suddenness of the attack, fled in every direction. According to the story told by Maurice Regan, Raymund owed his victory partly to an accident. The English, on their first arrival, had swept the cattle from the surrounding country, and had placed them, probably, in the larger inclosure of the camp: confined within a small circuit, and mad with terror at the terrible shouts of the Irish, and at the clashing of the English armour, eager to seek anywhere a place of safety, they rushed furiously through the entrance of the camp to force their way through the midst of the Irish. The latter hastily made way for them, and were thrown into confusion; and the English, seizing the moment, rushed upon their enemies, and made a terrible slaughter. The Norman bard tells us, that a thousand were left dead on the field; Giraldus estimates the slain at about five hundred. Raymund lost one of his choicest men, Alice de Berveny. Seventy citizens of Waterford were taken prisoners, who, at the instigation of Hervy de Montmaurice, and contrary to the wish of Raymund, were all thrown into the sea. Maurice Regan told a different story: he said, that the prisoners were beheaded by the order of Raymund, who was enraged at the loss of his friend Alice. But Giraldus was more likely to know the counsels and sentiments of the English barons, his own relations, than the interpreter of an Irish king, who was

not present at the action, and who, full of Irish feelings, when he heard of the slaughter would naturally enough attribute it to the spirit of revenge.

Giraldus must be in error when he fixes the arrival of Raymund at Dundunolf to the calends of May (*i. e.* the latter end of April,) for we are assured that it was quickly followed by that of earl Strongbow,* and yet Giraldus and the Norman poem agree in placing the arrival of Strongbow at the latter end of August. In passing the Welsh coast, Strongbow had been joined by Maurice de Prendergast and his followers, who returned with him to Ireland; and he landed in the neighbourhood of Waterford with an army of nearly fifteen hundred men. It was the eve of St. Bartholomew when the earl arrived, and the next day he laid siege to the city. Twice the assailants were repulsed from the walls, when Strongbow, observing a wooden house which was attached to the wall of the city, ordered some of his men, under cover of their armour, to cut down the post which supported it. The house fell, and dragged with it a large portion of the wall; and the English rushed through the breach, put to death all who opposed them, and made themselves masters of the city.

* So says the Norman bard, quoting, as usual, the authority of the *old people*.

" Solum le dit as ansciens,
Bien tost après, Richard li quens
A Waterford ariva;
Bien quinz cent od sei mena.
La vile seint Bartholomée
Esteit li quens arivé." (v. 1501.)

It is hardly probable that Raymund would have remained three months shut up in his little fort at Dundunolf.

In *Reginald's Tower* (so called from one of the Danish governors) were slain the two "Sytaracs," and were taken Reginald himself, and O'Felan, the king of the Decies, who had joined in the disastrous expedition against Dundunolf. At Waterford, immediately after its capture, Strongbow was joined by king Dermod, with Fitz Stephen and Maurice fitz Gerald, and by Raymund, who had remained with Hervy de Montmaurice and Walter Bluet at Dundunolf; and at their intercession, we are told, he spared the lives of his two prisoners, Reginald and O'Felan. Immediately after the arrival of Dermod, were celebrated the nuptials of Strongbow with his daughter Eva: the kingdom of Leinster, after Dermod's death, was the dower; and the united army, after leaving a garrison at Waterford, marched to the conquest of Dublin.

Meanwhile the other Irish chiefs, alarmed at this new arrival of foreigners, and informed of the intended attempt upon Dublin, had assembled under the banner of O'Connor, who fixed his head quarters at Clondalkin, and distributed his army, which is said to have amounted to thirty thousand men, in the woods and passes over the country through which he supposed that Dermod and his allies must have proceeded to Dublin, with orders to fortify all the passes on the road, and to plash the woods. The king of Leinster had, however, received timely intelligence of the movements of his enemies; he consulted the English barons, and it was resolved to change their route, to avoid the woods, and to march over the mountains by Glendalough. The first division of the army, consisting of seven hundred English, was led by Miles de Cogan, with whom was Donald Kavenagh. Next came Raymund, with eight hundred English, who was followed by Strongbow and

Dermod, with about three thousand English and a thousand Irish;* and lastly, came the main body of Dermod's Irish auxiliaries. On St. Matthew's day they came in sight of Dublin, which was defended by its Danish chieftain, Hasculf mac Turkil. The main body of the army halted at a short distance from the city, but Miles de Cogan encamped just under the wall; as did also Raymund, though at another point. Maurice Regan was immediately sent to the governor of the city, to require its delivery to Dermod, with thirty hostages. Laurence O'Toole, the archbishop of Dublin, urged the citizens to accede to Dermod's demand; and we are told, that the only subject of disagreement was the choice of the hostages, for the arrangement of which Hasculf demanded a truce till the following day. But in the midst of these negotiations, Miles de Cogan, impatient of delay, ordered his men to the walls, and forced his way into the city. Raymund, who seems to have acted partly in concert with him, made a simultaneous attack on the other side. Hasculf, with the greater part of the citizens, hurried their more valuable effects into their ships, and fled to the northern islands; and, after a short but furious struggle, and great slaughter, Cogan was master of Dublin before Dermod or Strongbow knew of the attack. Dublin yielded to its conquerors a rich booty: it was given into the care of Miles de Cogan, with a small garrison, and the earl returned with Dermod to Ferns; whence, from time to time, they made incursions into the territories of their neighbours, particularly

* The Norman poem, which gives this arrangement of the army, must be in error as to the numbers of the English. It should, perhaps, be "one thousand English and three thousand Irish."

into the kingdom of Dermod's old enemy, O'Rourk. O'Connor again expostulated with the king of Leinster, and begged that, if he would not dismiss his foreign allies, he would at least keep them within bounds. His expostulations were treated with scorn, and in revenge he put to death Dermod's son, who had been delivered to him as a hostage. During the winter (Giraldus says, in the calends of May) king Dermod, "full of years," died at Ferns, and Strongbow became, in right of his wife, *earl* of Leinster.

On the death of Dermod, a new confederacy was formed against the English; the only native chiefs who remained faithful to them being Donald Kavenagh, Mac Geley of Tirbrun, and Awelif O'Carvy. O'Conner again summoned the Irish kings to his banner, and a host of wild warriors, estimated by Maurice Regan at sixty thousand men, was marched to wrest from the earl his late conquest of Dublin.* O'Connor, with the half of his army, encamped at Castel Knock; Mac Dunleve of Ulster, fixed his banner at Clontarf: O'Brien of Munster established himself at Kilmainan; while Moriertagh, the king of Hy-Kinsellagh, encamped towards Dalkie; and, according to Giraldus, the port was besieged by a fleet of islanders, headed by Gottred king of Man. Two months the English had been confined within the walls of Dublin, when in a council, at which were present with Strongbow, Robert de Quency, Walter de

* Giraldus erroneously reverses the order of the two events—the sieges of Dublin by O'Connor, and by the Danes under Hasculf and John the Furious. A comparison of the dates will at once shew the error of the Welsh historian. It must not be forgotten, that while Miles de Cogan was besieged by the Danes and Norwegians, Strongbow was in England, and that he only returned to Ireland in company with king Henry.

Riddlesford, Maurice de Prendergast, Miles de Cogan, Meiler fitz Henry, Miles fitz David, Richard de Marreis, Walter Blueit, and others, to the number of about twenty, it was declared that the city did not contain provisions to last with economy for a fortnight; and it was proposed to treat with the besiegers. Giraldus mentions a report, that this confederacy of the Irish had been formed at the instigation of the archbishop of Dublin: according to Regan, it was the archbishop who was chosen in company with Maurice of Prendergast, to carry to O'Connor the propositions of the besieged; which were, that Strongbow should hold Leinster in fee of the king of Connaught. The latter, confident in his own strength and in the weakness of his opponents, and thinking to reduce them to the same footing on which the Danes had previously stood in those towns, declared peremptorily that he would allow the English to hold nothing more than Dublin, Wexford, and Waterford. To add to the embarrassments of the latter, Donald Kavenagh arrived at Dublin, with some Irish of Hy-Kinsellagh, accompanied by O'Ragely and Aweli O'Carvy, bringing intelligence of the revolt of the people of Wexford, and of the desperate position of Robert fitz Stephen, who, with his companions, had been obliged to seek refuge in the little fort of Carrig. A council of war was immediately held, and it was resolved to make a sudden sally upon the besiegers; the camp of O'Connor being selected as the first point of attack. A chosen band of six hundred English was secretly assembled, which was divided into three divisions: two hundred marched first, led by Miles de Cogan; they were followed by as many more, commanded by Raymund; and, lastly, came Strongbow himself, with a third division of two hundred men,

accompanied by Kavenagh, O'Carvy, and O'Ragely. The Irish were betrayed by their own security: the first notice they had of the approach of an enemy, was the redoubted cry of "St. David!" shouted in the very midst of their tents; and, totally unprepared for defence, their first impulse was to save themselves by flight. Between one and two thousand were slain, above a hundred of whom were killed while bathing; and O'Connor himself, who was at the time of the attack in a bath, narrowly escaped. The English pursued the fugitives till towards evening, and then returned to the city laden with provisions. Disheartened by the misfortune of the king of Connaught, the other Irish chieftains who surrounded Dublin immediately broke up their camps and sought their homes; and the day following, Strongbow was on his way to Wexford. In their march through Hy-Drone, the English were opposed by O'Rian, the king of that district; the Irish were much superior in numbers to the army of Strongbow; but after a fierce encounter, in which Meiler fitz Henry was thrown from his horse by a stone, they were entirely defeated, and O'Rian himself killed with an arrow by a monk called Nichol; which monk gained great praise for his valour in the battle.

Robert fitz Stephen and his companions had defended themselves bravely at Carrig, in daily expectation of relief from Dublin; till at length their besiegers demanded a parley. They brought with them the bishops of Wexford and Kildare, with other religious persons; and before them they swore solemnly, upon their relics, that Dublin was taken, that the English had all been put to the sword, and that the king of Connaught, with the whole Irish army, was on his way to Wexford. They declared that they had

no intention of hurting Fitz Stephen or his companions; that, on the contrary, they were desirous of saving them from the fate of their countrymen at Dublin; and that, if they would yield themselves prisoners, they should be allowed to pass in safety to Wales. Fitz Stephen, believing that Dublin was lost, and thus cut off from all hopes of relief, surrendered: the Irish, regardless of their oath, rushed upon the English, slew several, and threw the rest, with their leader, into prison. On the approach of Strongbow, the Wexfordians immediately burnt their town, and took refuge with their prisoners in the island of Begerin (Little Ireland), at the entrance of their harbour. The earl, when he was informed of the destruction of the city, and the impossibility of dislodging its inhabitants from their asylum for the present, turned towards Waterford.

On his arrival at Waterford, Strongbow sent in haste a messenger to Limerick, with letters to O'Brien, the king of Munster, who had also married a daughter of king Dermod, desiring him to join in the invasion of Ossory. The king of Munster declared his willingness to make war against the enemy of his father-in-law—but the hope of plunder was perhaps a stronger incentive—and he joined the earl of Leinster at Ydough, where their joint army amounted to two thousand men. The king of Ossory, daunted by the uniform success of the foreigners, offered to make reparation for all injuries he might have done to Dermod, and demanded a safe conduct and an interview with Strongbow. Maurice de Prendergast, his old ally, offered to be his conductor, and obtained the oaths of the English barons that the king should be allowed to return in safety to the woods. Strongbow loaded the king of Ossory with reproaches for his treason against Dermod; and O'Brien of

Munster, perceiving that the English were prejudiced against him, urgently begged them to arrest him; and thinking he perceived some inclination to follow his counsel, immediately gave secret orders to his own men to sally forth and plunder the country. But Maurice of Prendergast, having received intimation of what was going on, ordered his men to arms; and hastening himself to where the earl and his barons were assembled, he reproached them with treachery, and, laying his hand upon his sword, swore, that the first who dare to lay hands upon the king of Ossory should pay dearly for his temerity. The earl declared that he had not harboured the thought of injuring king Donald, and delivered him to Maurice, who, with his men, accompanied him in his return to the woods. On their way they met the men of Munster, laden with spoils. Maurice ordered his men to charge them; several were killed, and the rest dispersed. He passed the night in the woods with the king of Ossory, and the next morning returned to the English Camp, where the high character which he bore saved him from the suspicions of disaffection to their cause, which his bold conduct might have excited. The king of Munster returned to Limerick, and the earl to Ferns, where Morrough O'Brien (O'Byrne) and his son were brought prisoners, and immediately put to death. The king of Hy-Kinsellagh, Muriertagh, at the same time made his peace with the English, and was allowed to retain his kingdom. Dismayed at the disasters which day after day fell upon their countrymen, in their encounters with the invaders, the Irish clergy held a council at Armagh, where they agreed unanimously in looking upon them as a visitation of the divine vengeance for

their sins; particularly for the unchristian traffic in English slaves, of whom so many had been stolen from their homes.

The people of England had, probably, been used to pay very little attention to the affairs of the sister isle; and it would seem, that hitherto the progress of the English adventurers had not attracted much notice. The king of England had himself long contemplated the conquest of Ireland, but it had been his policy to cloak his views of personal aggrandisement under the pretence of zeal for the cause of the church. So early as the year 1155, he had made a formal application to pope Adrian for the apostolical permission of his undertaking; representing to him the barbarous and savage life which the Irish led, and the advantages which they must themselves derive in being placed under the influence and protection of the Romish see.* Adrian was an Englishman, and readily listened to these proposals; and his bull, which is still preserved, requires the king, in prosecuting his conquest, to secure to him the regular payment of Peter's penny, and to attend, above all things, to the improvement of the morals of the uncivilised people whom he was going to place under his sceptre. His continual hostilities on the Continent had obliged him to delay the prosecution of the enterprise; but in 1171, while Strongbow was in the midst of his conquests, Henry, then in Normandy, called together his

* Henry proposed, "Homines illos bestiales ad fidem Christi decentius revocare, ecclesiæque Romanæ fidelius inclinare."—*Matth. West.* For particulars of the proceedings of the king in Normandy during this period, we may refer our readers to M. Depping's *Histoire de la Normandie, sous le Règne de Guillaume le Conquérant et de ses Successeurs*, 2 tom. Rouen, Frère, 1835.

barons at Argentan, and opened to them his intention of marching immediately to the subjugation of Ireland.

A crowd of circumstances combined in driving the king to this resolution. The murder of Becket, the same year, had caused a general ferment, not less among the laity than among the clergy; it had raised the courage of the king's enemies, who joined in applying to the pope for vengeance against the murderers, and in aggravating the blackness of the deed and the culpability of Henry himself. The pope had appointed legates to make an inquisition into the conduct of the latter, and they were already on their way to Normandy. The invasion of Ireland would at least have the effect of delaying their proceedings: it would give the popular agitation time to subside, in turning it to a different channel; it might also probably restore him to the favour of the Roman see, and it would give him an increase of popularity among his own subjects, and would thus add to his means of defence. At the same time, Ireland, already half-subdued by an English army, must now be an easy acquisition; if left longer, the barons who had established themselves there might be strong enough to set him at defiance. He accordingly left Normandy for England: he there assembled a powerful army, and on the fourteenth of September, the festival of the exaltation of the holy cross, he reached Pembroke, where he was detained some time by contrary winds.

Henry's first step had been to proclaim his displeasure against Strongbow, for having made such extensive conquests without the authority of his sovereign. He ordered him to appear in person at his court, confiscated his English estates, and forbade any ship in future, without the royal orders, to transport men or arms from England to

Ireland. The earl immediately sent Hervy de Montmaurice to remonstrate with the king. While Strongbow was prosecuting his hostilities against the king of Ossory, Hervy arrived at Waterford, on his return from this mission, and by his counsel the former immediately sailed for England. According to Giraldus, he met the king at Newenham, in Gloucestershire; and after promising to surrender Dublin, with its adjoining cantreds, and all the maritime towns, as well as the strong castles of Leinster, he obtained the royal grant, in fee to himself and heirs, of the whole of his conquests.

Before leaving Ireland, Strongbow had given his two cities, Dublin and Waterford, the first to the care of the brave Miles de Cogan, who had captured it, and the other to the custody of Gilbert de Borard. No sooner had Strongbow left the Irish shores, than a new danger presented itself before the former city. Hasculf, who had been driven with his Danes from Dublin, had collected a numerous army amongst the islands. He was joined by a famous Norwegian chieftain, called John the Furious (in Norman, Johan le Devé; in English of that period, John the Woode; in the Latin of Giraldus, Johannes Vehemens); and together they entered the Liffy, in from sixty to a hundred ships, about Pentecost, which in that year fell on the sixteenth of May. Cogan prepared for a vigorous defence. Gilmeholmock, an Irish king who had hitherto been faithful to the English, and whose hostages were in Dublin, came with his men to receive the orders of its English governor: the latter, perhaps, had no great confidence in his ally, and feared to be embarrassed by his treachery. With the chivalrous spirit of his age, he ordered the Irish chieftain to stand aloof from the combat

until he should see its conclusion: should the English give way, he was to join the enemy; but in case they should obtain the victory, he bound himself to join with them in the destruction of the invaders. The place where Gilmeholmock stationed himself is named, by the Norman poet, "the Hogges of Sustein."

Meanwhile, John the Furious, at the head of a large party of the Danes and Norwegians, approached the eastern gate of the city. Giraldus describes the assailants as men clad in iron—some in long coats of mail, others in armour formed of plates of the same metal, skilfully joined together, with round red shields, the edges of which were also defended with iron. Miles de Cogan, with a part of the garrison, marched boldly out to meet them; but the Danes, whose hearts, as Giraldus tells us, were made of the same metal as their arms, pressed fiercely upon the English. Their leader proved himself worthy of his name. With one blow of his axe he cut in two the thigh of an English knight, though cased in iron, so that one part of his leg fell to the ground; and Miles and his company were obliged to seek shelter within the walls of the city. But his brother, Richard de Cogan, with about thirty knights and a large company of foot, had left the city secretly by another gate, and just as Miles was entering the town, hard pressed by his assailants, they fell suddenly upon that part of the Danish army which was left in the rear. Those who had advanced to the assault of the city, in the moment, as they thought of victory, were obliged to hurry back to the assistance of their companions, of whom Richard was making terrible havoc. Miles de Cogan fell upon them as they went; John the Furious was himself slain by Walter de Riddlesford, one of Cogan's

knights; Hasculf had been already captured by Richard de Cogan; and, to complete the victory, Gilmeholmock, seeing from his camp the confusion into which they had thrown the invaders, and fearing to lose his chance of a share in the action, rushed down with his Irish to join in the slaughter. Two thousand Danes were slain in the engagement;—the field was covered with their dead; and the victors pursued them so closely to the sea, that five hundred more were drowned in attempting to gain their ships. When Hasculf was brought before Miles, in Dublin, his insolence so provoked the anger of the English governor, that he immediately ordered him to be put to death.

On the evening of the sixteenth of October, the king of England, in company with Strongbow, sailed from Milford Haven, with a fleet of four hundred ships; and the next day, which was Sunday, he landed, at Croch, only a few miles from Waterford, which city he entered on the Monday morning, the day of the festival of St. Luke.* With the king were William fitz Aldelm, Humfrey de Bohun, Hugh de Lacy, Robert fitz Bernard, and Bertram de Verdun. Immediately after their arrival, Strongbow did homage to Henry for the earldom of Leinster, and delivered the city into his hands; the custody of which the king gave to Robert fitz Bernard. Soon after, a deputation arrived from the people of Wexford, who, when they

* Our dates of Henry's progress in Ireland are chiefly taken from the history of Benedict of Peterburgh. All the authorities agree pretty exactly in the period of his arrival at Waterford, except the Norman poet, whom we might almost have suspected of having used the authority of Giraldus, and of having misunderstood his expression "Circa Calendas Nov." when he places the king's arrival on the day of all Saints, the first of November.

had heard that Henry was on his way to Ireland, and that he had openly expressed his displeasure against the invaders of that country, thought to make a merit of delivering to him their prisoner, Robert fitz Stephen. The king at least pretended to give ear to their accusations, and, after severely reprimanding the delinquent, ordered him to be closely confined in Reginald's Tower. After having received the oaths of fidelity from the kings of Cork, Limerick, and Ossory, as well as from Melaghlin O'Felan and Reginald the ex-governor of Waterford, the king proceeded to Dublin, having previously made an excursion to Cassel and Lismore.

Thus king Henry, after passing through Ossory, arrived at Dublin about Martinmas; where, outside the city by St. Martin's church, was raised for him a palace of wood and twigs, such as those in which the Irish kings were accustomed to hold their courts (*scilicet ad morem patriæ illius*), though, probably, on a much larger scale. He there held, with great splendour, the festival of Christmas-day (which fell on a Saturday, and was, according to the manner of reckoning in those days, when the old custom of the pagan Anglo-Saxons was still in use, the first day of the year 1172), his court being attended by most of the native chieftains.

At Dublin the king received the homage of most of the Irish chieftains, except those of Connaught and Ulster. The inclemency of the season obliged him, as well as Strongbow, who held his court at Kildare, to pass the winter in inaction; and the news of the arrival of the cardinals from Rome, and the rebellious projects of his son Henry, obliged him to leave Ireland, content with receiving the homage of O'Connor by proxy, as the haughty chieftain

would not condescend to pass the Finn, the boundary of his kingdom, where he was met by Hugh de Lacy and William fitz Aldelm. The whole of Ireland had now acknowledged the supremacy of the king of England, except Ulster; which, before his departure for England, the king granted to John de Courcy, "on the condition that he could conquer it." He also granted Meath in fee to Hugh de Lacy.

At the festival of the purification, the second of February, the king was still at Dublin. He gave the government of that city to Hugh de Lacy, leaving with him Robert fitz Stephen, whom he had liberated before quitting Waterford, Meiler fitz Henry, and Miles fitz David; and on Ash-Wednesday, which that year fell on the first of March, he entered Wexford. The army proceeded thence, about the middle of Lent, to Waterford, to embark on board the ships which waited there; and, having left the two last-mentioned towns in the custody of Robert fitz Bernard, the king left Ireland on Easter-day, the sixteenth of April, and the same day entered Milford Haven, whence he hastened to Normandy.

From the period of Henry's visit to Ireland, we may date the dependence of that country upon the English crown; although the struggle between the invaders and the natives was by no means ended. The succeeding history unfolds to us a long series of violent encounters, of surprises, stratagems, and murders. With the spring of 1172, Strongbow had again commenced hostilities, which were chiefly directed against Offally; and in his return from one of these excursions, in a sudden and unexpected attack from the Irish, he lost his constable and standard bearer, Robert de Quency, to whom he had given in marriage his sister Basilea. Raymund sought the hand of the widow,

and the constableship, until the only daughter of De Quency should be of age to marry. His demand was refused: he left Ireland in disgust, and returned to Wales; and the constableship was given to the care of his envious rival, Hervy de Montmaurice. When the Irish were no longer held in check by the bravery and experience of Raymund, the loss of his services was soon felt by the English, and he was recalled by Strongbow; who now, at last, consented to give him his sister in marriage, and with her the custody of the constableship and considerable grants of land, including Fothard, Hy-Drone, and Glascarrig. At the same time, he made a general distribution of lands to his followers; he gave O'Barthie to Hervy; he gave Fernegenall to Maurice de Prendergast, who also possessed the district of Kinsellagh; to Meiler fitz Henry he gave Carberry: and to Maurice fitz Gerald, Wicklow and the territory of Mac Kelan.

Hugh de Lacy, who had been left governor of Dublin, nearly fell a victim to the treachery of O'Rourk, whom Giraldus calls "the one-eyed king of Meath." He was saved by the vigilance of Maurice fitz Gerald. O'Rourk himself was killed; and soon afterwards, Lacy, having by the king's orders delivered Dublin to Strongbow, entered into Meath, which the king had granted to him, and distributed large gifts of land among his followers. The whole strength of the Irish was now directed against the new settlements in Meath; and during Hugh de Lacy's absence his lands were invaded, and his castles, particularly that of Trim, destroyed.

But if disunion was sometimes the bane of the English settlers, it was much more frequently the cause of defeat and disgrace to the natives. Immediately after the invasion

of Meath, we find the king of Ossory, the old enemy of Dermod, leading the English army against the distant city of Limerick.* After prodigies of valour performed by the latter, who were led by their favorite commander Raymund, that city was taken; and the aid of the conqueror was almost immediately solicited by Dermod mac Carthy the king of Desmond, against his rebellious son. This district also became tributary to the English. While Raymund was at Limerick, his brother-in-law, earl Strongbow, died at Dublin in the beginning of the June of 1176, the sixth year after the first landing of the English adventurers in Ireland; and Raymund immediately left Limerick, which it would have been dangerous to retain at this critical moment, to the care of an Irish chieftain. The latter rebelled, and Limerick was lost for the second time since its first occupation by the English. Maurice fitz Gerald died at Wexford at the end of the August following. After Strongbow's death, the king confided the government of Ireland to William fitz Aldelm.

The government of Fitz Aldelm was weak and ungrateful to the English; and John de Courcy was driven, by his disgust with the conduct of his superior, to undertake his long-projected expedition against Ulster. With a few brave companions he made a three days' march through a hostile country, and on the fourth reached the city of Down; which, totally unprepared for so sudden an attack, was immediately occupied by the invaders. The king, Dunleve, saved himself by flight; but, after some attempts at negotiation, he returned with an army of ten thousand men to

* In the commencement of this siege the Norman poem ends abruptly.

recover his capital. The men of Ulster were the bravest of the Irish, yet John de Courcy, disdaining to fight within walls, advanced from the city to meet them; and a long and obstinate battle ended in the success of the English, who made so terrible a slaughter of their enemies, that Giraldus applies to them literally an old Irish prophecy, which said that the invaders of Ulster should march up to their knees in blood. The fate of Ulster was disputed in many battles, but the desperate valour of John de Courcy overcame all obstacles, and the last independent province of Ireland was placed under English law and Romish church discipline. The chronicles of the time tell us how the barbarous manners of the natives were suddenly improved and polished by the more vigorous government under which they were placed. *

* All the documents of this period agree in representing Ireland as not only a land of savages, but as a den of thieves. William of Newbury, (lib. iii. c. 9,) speaking of the manners of the people of Ulster at the time of their conquest by De Courcy, says, "Hujus autem provinciæ homines præ cunctis Hyberniæ populis in celebratione paschali eatenus superstitiosi fuisse traduntur. Nam sicut quodam venerabili episcopo gentis illius referente cognovi, arbitrabantur obsequium se præstare Deo, dum per anni circulum furto et rapina congererent, quod in paschali solemnitate profusissimis tanquam ad honorem resurgentis Domini absumeretur conviviis, eratque inter eos urgens concertatio, ne forte quis ab alio immoderatissimis ferculorum præparationibus vinceretur. Verum hanc superstitiosissimam consuetudinem cum statu libertatis propriæ debellati finierunt."

ESSAY XIX.

ON OLD ENGLISH POLITICAL SONGS.

O class of literary antiquities has progressed more rapidly with us during the last twenty years than the study of early English poetry. Until the time of Warton, it was hardly supposed that the history of English poetry could be traced back beyond the days of Chaucer; and Warton's history is very incomplete, and abounds with inaccuracies. Percy, by the popular character of his *Reliques*, called a little more of public attention to the subject. Ritson was certainly the first who carried any true zeal to his researches among early English poetical manuscripts, and who edited the texts with conscientiousness; but his vain pedantry and acrimony of temper, and his entire want of judgment, detract much from the utility of his labours. After Ritson's time, this class of literature dwindled again into little more than a plaything for bibliographers. In more recent times it has been taking its stand on a better footing; and more accurate philological notions have been brought to the study of our language in its earlier and middle stages. That these notions, however, are but yet in their infancy, is proved by the fact that so worthless a text as that of

Tyrwhitt's Chaucer has been suffered to be reprinted more than once within the last two or three years.

The supremacy of the Anglo-Norman language has created rather a wide gap between the disappearance of the pure Anglo-Saxon poetry and the commencement of the early English; for, during the long period between the conquest and the middle of the thirteenth century, we find only two poems of any magnitude, the chronicle of Layamon and the Gospel Harmony of Orm, and one or two short pieces, such as the proverbs of Alfred, a Bestiary, a fragment on the popular subject of the body and the soul, and the poem of the Owl and the Nightingale. The language of most of these is in a state of rapid transition, which has commonly received the title of Semi-Saxon. A large portion of them partake of the older Saxon form of alliteration, mixed with rhyme. The English language appears to have regained its position of supremacy after the great baronial struggle under Simon de Montfort; and from this period to the war of the Roses it has been sometimes denominated, by those who follow the nomenclature of Dr. Grimm, Middle-English. During the latter part of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth, the English poetry appears with the forms and much of the spirit of the French and Anglo-Norman poetry, of which it was taking the place.

The longer poems—especially the religious poetry—of the first half of the fourteenth century, are dull and heavy. But, under Edward III, the old alliterative poetry, which had probably continued to exist orally, suddenly reappeared in the spirited and extremely popular political allegory of the "Visions of Piers Ploughman." Immediately after this work came the real father of modern English poetry,

Geoffrey Chaucer. The production of those high cultivations of poetry represented by Chaucer appears to have been the result of a long age of intellectual movement, which, after his death, gave place to an age of more than ordinary intellectual darkness, when English poetry becomes, it is true, very abundant, but when it possesses very little merit. John Lydgate is the type of the poetical literature of this age.

In general, during the whole of the period of which we are speaking, we find the greatest share of poetic spirit in the popular songs and ballads. The English lyric poetry of the reign of Edward I is, from the form of the language, somewhat obscure, but it is often very elegant. We have much good lyric poetry in the fourteenth century, and a few charming specimens even in the fifteenth. The political songs partake largely of this character, and they always present at least that vivacity which is the necessary consequence of popular excitement.

The collection of "Political Songs" published by the Camden Society was an attempt to form a regular series of such monuments in illustration of English history. They are not only valuable in this point of view, but also as the most authentic proofs of the variations through which our language has passed. Unfortunately they are the class of which, naturally, the smallest portion has been preserved. Until the middle of the thirteenth century the political songs of this country appear to have been almost universally written in Latin or French, because it was only the grades of society which made use of those languages who took an active part in political transactions. The lower orders, till then in a state bordering on slavery, came into life in the baronial wars, after which their language—in principle

the language of their Saxon forefathers—was heard loudest as the watchword of political strife. The oldest English political song preserved relates to the battle of Lewes in 1261.

From notices however, which frequently occur in our old chronicles, it appears very clearly that, at all periods of English history, songs and ballads were the popular instruments equally of libel and of praise, of expressing dissatisfaction as well as of rejoicing. In Fabyan we are told, that on the death of king Henry I people were divided in their opinions, some praising his good qualities, whilst others were more inclined to censure his faults. "One other," he adds, "made these versys of hym as folowen:

"Kynge Henrye is deade, bewtie of the worlde, for whom his greate dole,
Goddes nowe maken for theyr kinde brother. For he is sole
Mercurius in speche, Marce in battayle, harte stronge Appollo,
Jupyter in hest, egall with Saturne, and enemye to Cupydo.
Kyng he was of ryght, and man of most might, and gloryous in rayning.
And when he left his crowne, then fell honour downe, for mysse of suche a kynge.
Normandye than gan lowre, for losse of theyr floure, and sange wel away,
Englande made mone, and Scotlande dyd grone, for to se that daye."

This is probably a mere translation from a Latin poem.

Songs appear also, from an early period, to have been favorite instruments in raising and organising rebellions. The two lines given by Holinshed and Lambarde, as part of those sung by the earl of Leicester's rebels in the reign of Henry II,—

"Hoppe Wylikin, hoppe Wyllykin,
Ingland is thyne and myne."

sound to us very much like the burden of a song. In Wat Tyler's rebellion, in the reign of Richard II, the letter of John Ball, given in Holinshed, from an older chronicle, a copy of which was said to have been found in the pocket of one of the rioters, contains some rude rhymes, such as we may suppose these rustics to have committed to memory as a sort of watchword:

"John Scheepe, S. Marie preest of Yorke, and now of Colchester, greeteth well John Namelesse, and John the Miller, and John Carter, and biddeth them that they beware of guile in bourrough, and stand togither in God's name; and biddeth Piers ploughman to go to his worke, and chastise well Hob the robber, and take with you John Trewman and all his fellowes, and no mo.

'John the Miller y-ground small, small, small;
the kings sonne of heaven shall paie for all.
Beware or yee be wo,
knowe your freend from your fo,
have inough and saie ho,
and doo well and better, flee sinne,
and seeke peace, and hold you therein,
And so biddeth John Trewman and all his fellowes.'"

On the Scottish borders there would seem to have been kept up a constant warfare with songs and ballads. Fabyan, speaking of the second year of Ed. III (1327), says, "In this yere, whiche at this daye was the seconde yere of the kyng Davyd fore said, the soonne of Robert le Bruze, then kyng of Scottes, maryed vpon the daye of Marye Magdeleine, at the towne of Berwyke, the forenamed Jane, sister vnto the kyng of Englande. But it was not long

or the Scottes, in dispite of the Englishe menne, called hir Jane Makepeace. And also to their more derision, thei made diuerse truffes, roundes, and songes, of the whiche one is specially remembred as foloweth :

Long beerdis hartles
Paynted hoodes coytles,
Gay cottes gracelis,
Maketh Englande thryfteles.

Whiche ryme, as saieth Gvydo, was made by the Scottes, princypally for the deformyte of clothyng that at those dayes was vsed by Englysshe menne."

A few years before this, in 1297, while Edward I was besieging Berwick, the Scots made this rhyme upon him, as saith Fabyan :

" What wenys kyng Edward with his long shankes
To have wonne Berwike, all our unthankes.
Gaas pykes hym,
And when he hath it
Gaas dykes hym."

However, the Scots were beaten in this instance, both with sword and song. Berwick was soon taken, and, shortly after, they suffered a signal discomfiture at Dunbar : " Wherfore the Englishe menne, in reproche of the Scottes, made this rime following :

" These scaterand Scottes
Hold wee for sottes
Of wrenches unware ;
Erly in a mornyng
In an eivill timyng
Came thei to Dunbarre."

We imagine, this, too, from the appearance of it, to have been a stanza of a song; it is inserted, with several other similar fragments, in the French metrical chronicle of Peter Langtoft.

With the reigns of Henry III and the Edwards such poems become much more plentiful than in previous times, and are (particularly under Edward I) for their intrinsic merit well deserving of our notice. Few political events seem to have happened at the time which were not thought worthy, at least, of a song. We may instance one. The battle of Lewes, gained by the barons in the reign of Henry, could not fail to raise the hopes of their partisans to the highest pitch; and we have, in a MS. in the Harleian collection, a spirited song, which may be supposed to have been written in the moment of victory. It is altogether a clever and witty performance, and the circumstance of the king of Almaigne having, after the battle was lost, taken refuge in a windmill, which he barricadoed and defended till evening, when he was compelled to surrender, is sarcastically related:

"The kyng of Alemaigne wende do ful wel,
He saisede the mulne for a castel,
With hare sharpe swerdes he grounde the stel,
He wende that the sayles were mangonel
To helpe Wyndesore.

The kyng of Alemaigne gederede ys host,
Makede him a castel of a mulne post,
Wende with is prude and is muchele host,
Brohte from Alemayne moni sori gost
To store Wyndesore."

The battle of Evesham, which followed, and in which Simon de Montfort, the head of the rebellious barons was

slain, gave occasion for other poems; and there is one among the Harleian MSS. in Norman French, made, like the other, by one of De Montfort's partisans, lamenting over the fate of that nobleman, and holding him forth in the light of a martyr. The song on Sir Piers de Birmingham also belongs to the end of this reign, though written some years after: as also, perhaps, the severe satires on the Romish clergy, contained in the MS. from which that song was taken. Among them is a ballad setting forth (and with good reason, as we may gather from Fabyan) the violent and unjust proceedings of the people in power, and applying to them, with much *naïveté*, a fable of the lion (as king) and the wolf, fox, and ass, where the fox by his cunning, and the wolf by his strength and power, are allowed to rob and oppress with impunity, while the simple ass is punished even for his harmlessness.

Of the reign of Edward I we may mention the ballads against the French and against the Scots, which have been printed from the Harleian MSS. No. 2253; the former of which ends with this denunciation:

"3ef the prince of Walis his lyf habbe mote,
Hit falleth the kyng of Fraunce bittrore then the sote;
Bote he the rathere therof welle do bote,
Wel sore hit shal hym rewe."*

There is also a ballad, or "ditty," as it is called in the catalogue, in the same MS., complaining much of the great taxes and fees extorted by the king's officers; and a song, partly in French and partly in Latin, accusing the king with leaving England to make war in foreign parts, against

* *Bote*, unless—*welle do bote*, make full amendment.

the will of his subjects, and of oppressing his people by levying a fifteenth, and taxing their wool, &c.; half of the produce of which taxes did not come into his coffers, but was embezzled by the officers who collected it. Another Norman-French poem is directed against the commission of *traile-baston*, which was issued by Edward I about 1306, and consequently near the end of his reign. The last stanza informs us how secretly it was written:

" C'est rym fust fet al bois, desouz un lorer;
Là chaunte merle, russinole, e cyre l'esperver.
Escrit estoit en parchemyn par mout remembrer;
E gitté en haut chemyn, qe um le dust trover."

Percy printed, from the same volume, an elegy on the death of Edward I.; in which his loss is bewailed as that of the first knight in Christendom. A Norman-French version of the same elegy is found in a manuscript in the public library at Cambridge.* Fabyan seems to look upon this king Edward with great satisfaction, and gives us two Latin elegies on his death, which he has translated into English, "to the entent that they shulde be had in mynde." One of them, because it is short, we give here:

" While lyved this kynge,
By his power all thynge
Was in good plyghte.
For gyle was hydde,
Greate peace was kydde,
And honesté had myghte."

* All these are printed in my Political Songs, published by the Camden Society.

During the reigns of the first three Edwards, indeed, poetry seems to have been much cultivated. The kings carried about with them, when on their military expeditions, chosen poets to celebrate their victories; and we have an excellent specimen of their performances in the spirited poetry of Lawrence Minot, under Edward III, which has been printed from one of the Cottonian MSS. by Ritson.

From this time forward we can collect a regular series of poetical attacks on the growing vices of the Romish clergy till the reformation; and some few poetical pieces by the monks, in their own defence. Of the latter may be instanced the song against the Lollards, printed by Ritson. Of the former, among the earliest are those contained in the Harl. MSS. No. 913. Immediately following these, in respect to date, are those contained in No. 2253 of the same collection; of which one, in Norman-French, which sums up all the vices of the clergy in the qualifications of an imaginary new order—"*l'ordre de bel eyse*"—is extremely amusing.

In the succeeding reign we have some few scattered pieces of a political character, and it is extremely probable that many more may easily be found. To the reign of Richard II we may refer the subjects of the two ancient ballads of Chevy Chase and Otterbourne, given by Percy, though the ballads themselves are of a later date. Among the MSS. of Corpus College, there are one or two copies of verses relating to the insurrections of the peasantry during this reign. One of these, in alternate lines of English and Latin, made by one who at least seems to have favoured the commonalty, is any thing but a rustic composition: it is printed from more than one manuscript, in the Reliquiæ Antiquæ, and begins thus,—

"Tax has tenet us all,
probat hoc mors tot validorum,
The kyng therof hade smalle,
fuit in manibus cupidorum." *

The old chronicles give us a most melancholy picture of the dissensions and "frays," as Fabyan calls them, which raged in most of our towns during these ages; and we can scarcely doubt that each town had its own songs and ballads. We shall give an example of one of these, which has been printed from the Cole MSS. by Hartshorne,—a threatening notice which was posted over the door of the mayor of Cambridge (or, as the title has it, *billa posita super hostium majoris*), in the beginning of the fifteenth century; it is worthy in every respect of a modern contested election.

"Looke out here, maire, with thie pilled pate,
And see wich a scrowe is set on thie gate,
Warning the of harde happes,
For and it lukke thou shalt have swappes.
Therefore I rede keepe the at home;
For thou shalt abey for that is done:
Or els 'kest on a coate of mayle;
Truste well thereto withouten fayle.
And great Golias Joh Essex
Shalt have a clowte with my harille axe,
Wherever I may him have.
And the hosteler Bambo, with his goats beard,
Once and it happe shall be made afeard,
So God mote me save.
And sit with thie catche-poles hope I to mete,
With a fellow or twayne in the playne streete,

* *Tenet*, grieved.

And her crownes brake.
And that harlot Hierman, with his calves snowte,
Of buffets full sekerly shall bern a rowte,
For his werkes sake.
And yet shall Hankyn Attibrigge,
Full ȝerne for swappes his tayle wrigge,
And it hap ariht.
And other knaves all on heape
Shall take knockes ful good cheape,
Come once winter niht.
But nowe I praye to God Almight,
That whatsoever thou spare,
That metche sorowe to him bediht,
And evill mote he fare.
Amen, quoth he that beshrewd the mairs very visage." *

In the reign of Henry V we have a song of rejoicing on the victory at Azincourt, printed by Percy from one of the Pepysian MSS., which, as he observes, has no poetical merits to commend it. The reign of his successor affords us more. We have a sarcastic ballad, exulting over the death of the duke of Suffolk, William de la Pole; and another song, which is curious, as relating to an important event. After the first battle of St. Albans, by the mediation of the archbishop of Canterbury and others, a conference was held between the two adverse parties, the Yorkists and Lancastrians. "By reason whereof," says Fabyan, "a dissimuled unite and concorde betwene theim was concluded. In token and for ioy wherof, the kyng, the quene, and all the said lordes, vpon our Lady daye annunciacion in Lent at Paules wente solemply in proces-

* *Wich a scrowe*, what a scroll—*rede*, counsel—*kest*, cast—*ȝit*, yet —*sekerly*, surely—*ȝerne*, earnestly—*metche*, much.

sion, and soone after euery lorde departed where his pleasure was." This procession is the subject of the song just mentioned. It describes the joy manifested on the occasion, recounts the principal persons who had laboured to bring about peace, and concludes with the praise of London.

" God preserve hem we pray hertly,
And London, for thei ful diligently
Kepten the peas in trowbel and adversité,
To bryng in reste thei labured ful truly.

Of thre thynges I praise the worshipful cité:
The firste, the true faithe that thei have to the kynge;
The seconde, of love to the comynalté;
The thrid, goude rule for evermore kepynge.

The which God maynteyn evermore durynge,
And save the maier and all the worthi cité;
And that is amys God bryng to amendynge,
That Anglond may rejoise to concorde and unité."

It is worthy of remark, as regards the praise thus bestowed on "the worshipful cité," that, after mentioning this procession, Fabyan tells us, in his pleasant gossipping way, "and in the moneth of —— folowyng, was a greate fray in fletestrete, betwene the menne of courte and the inhabitauntes of the said strete in whiche fraye a gentilmanne beynge the quenes attourney was slaine." A number of very curious political songs, relating to the events of the wars of the Roses have been contributed by Sir Frederic Madden and others to the later volumes of the Archæologia.

During the reigns of which we have been speaking, we have also abundance of poetry of a lighter cast, much of

which has already been printed. We will give a song, though rude in its kind, from a small volume, contained in the Sloane MSS. in the British Museum, on paper, in the writing of about the age of Henry VI. These songs, which are in a dialect rather provincial, are very curious specimens of the popular poetry of that age. The following is of a satirical character, and is not entirely devoid of wit. It describes the mischances to which a man was liable, who carried what was then looked upon as an article of ostentation, a *baselard* (dagger), but who had not courage to keep it.

" Prenegard, prenegard, thus bere I myn baselard.
Lesteneth, lordyngs, I ȝou beseke,
Ther is non man worȝt a leke,
Be he sturdy, be he meke,
But he bere a baselard.

Myn baselard haȝt a schede of red,
And a clene loket of led;
Me thinketh I may bere up my hed,
For I bere myn baselard.

My baselard haȝt a wrethin hafte;
Qwan I am ful of ale cawte,
It is gret dred of man slawte,
For then I bere myn baselard.

My baselard haȝt a silver shape;
Therfore I may both gaspe and gape.
Me thinketh I go lyk non knape,
For I bere a baselard.

My baselard haȝt a trencher kene,
Fayr as rasour scharp and schene.
Evere me thinketh I may be kene,
For I bere a baselard.

As I ȝede up in the strete,
With a cartere I gan mete:
Felawe, he seyde, so mot I the,
Thou xalt forgo thi baselard.

The cartere his qwyppe began to take,
And al myn fleych began to qwake,
And I was lef for to escape,
And there I left myn baselard.

Qwan I came forȝt on to myn damme,
Myn hed was brokyn to the panne:
Che seyde I was a praty manne,
And wel cowde bere myn baselard."*

As we approach the time of the reformation, with the introduction and improvement of the art of printing, books of all kinds become more and more abundant; and we are then at no loss for political songs. The bustling reign of Henry VIII, for instance, will furnish us with many. During this reign, it appears that broadside printed ballads became common, and the folio volumes of these ballads, and other political poems, which Percy mentions as existing in the archives of the Society of Antiquaries, and "digested under the several reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, James I, &c.," contain some curiosities.

Ritson was not right in saying that "very few ballads exist of an earlier date than the reign of James, or even Charles I." This would, nevertheless, be a thing not so much to be lamented, as far as regards ballads of a

* *Worȝt*, worth—*qwan*, when—*schene*, bright—*ȝede*, went—*the*, thrive—*qwyppe*, whip—*forȝt*, forth—*damme*, dame.

general nature, inasmuch as they were mostly reprinted in garlands by their authors, such as Deloney, and "that balad-poet, Thomas Elderton, who did arm himself with ale, as old father Ennius did with wine, when he balated." A great portion, too, of the broadside ballads published during the seventeenth century were reprints. Unfortunately, the political ballads were those least attractive to the buyers of succeeding times.

When we speak of the political ballads as being seldom reprinted, we except many historical ballads, which we find were reprinted, and some of which may perhaps be traced back with sufficient certainty to the time, or very near the time, of the events to which they refer. There are some also which seem to be revivals of older ballads, much modernised, like the modern copy of Chevy Chace. In making this observation, we had more particularly in our mind such a ballad as that in the *Garland of Delight* (one of Deloney's garlands), which has for its title, "The Winning of the Isle of Man, by the noble Earl of Salisbury." We give the first three stanzas.

"The noble earl of Salisbury,
With many a hardy knight,
Most valiantly prepard himself
Against the Scots to fight.
With his spear and his shield
Making his proud foes to yield,
Fiercely on them all he ran,
To drive them from the Isle of Man,
Drums striking on a row,
Trumpets sounding as they go,
Tan ta ra ra ra tan.

Their silken ensigns in the field
Most gloriously were spread,
The horsemen on their prancing steeds
Struck many Scotchmen dead;
The brown bills on their corslets ring,
The bowmen with their gray goose wing,
The lusty lance, the piercing spear,
The soft flesh of their foes do tear;
Drums beating on a row,
Trumpets sounding as they go,
Tan ta ra ra ra tan.

The battle was so fierce and hot,
The Scots for fear did fly,
And many a famous knight and 'squire
In gory blood did lie.
Some, thinking for to scape away,
Did drown themselves within the sea
Some, with many a bloody wound,
Lay gasping on the clayey ground;
Drums beating on a row,
Trumpets sounding as they go,
Tan ta ra ra ra tan."

In the sequel, king Edward makes the earl knight of the garter and first king of Man. We find it noticed in Gough's Camden, that in the reign of Edward III, about the year 1340, William Montacute the younger, earl of Salisbury, "rescued Man by force of arms out of the hands of the Scots."

Of the political poems of the reign of Henry VIII, we may mention the ballads on the battle of Flodden, of which there are several, and the songs and ballads on the Reformation. We may add to these the so-much and so unjustly

censured poems of the "lawreate" Skelton, of which an edition has been recently published by Mr. Dyce. A volume in the Harleian collection contains several libels of Henry's reign, (No. 2252.) Percy has printed a song on the fall of Cromwell. There is a ballad, preserved in one of the garlands, on the riots against the foreigners at this time; and there is in MS. a song, which has been printed by Sir John Hawkins, and is supposed to be a satire on the drunken Flemings who came into England with the princess Anne of Cleves.

"Ruttekin is come unto our town,
In a cloke without cote or gown,
Save a raggid hoode to kyver his crown.
Like a ruttekin, hoyday, hoyday,
Jolly ruttekin, hoyday, hoyday.

Ruttekin can speke no Englishe,
His tong renyth all on buttyrd fishe,
Besmerde with greese about his dishe,
Like a ruttekin, &c.

Ruttekin shall bring you all good luck,
A stoop of beer up at a pluk,
Till his braine be as wise as a duk,
Like a ruttekin, &c."

Among the Lansdowne MSS. there is a volume of poems written on paper said in the catalogue to be of "about the time of Henry VIII," and some of its contents prove this to be correct. The poem, however, which we are going to quote is at least older than the time of the reformation. Its title in the MS. is "A processe or an exortation to tendre the chargis of the true husbondys," and it gives us

a singularly curious account of the taxes and extortions to which landed property was then subjected. After repeating the burden—"I praye to God spede wele the plough"—the song goes on to say:

"And so shulde of right the parson praye,
That hath the tithe shefe of the londe;
For our sarvauntys we most nedis paye,
Or ellys ful still the plough maye stonde.
Then cometh the clerk anon at hande
To have a shef of corne there it groweth;
And the sexten somwhate in his hande.
I praye to God spede wele the plough.

The kyngis purviours also they come
To have whete and otys at the kyngis nede,
And over that befe and mutton,
And butter and pulleyn, so God me spede;
And to the kyngis courte we moste it lede,
And our payment shal be a styk of a bough;
And yet we moste speke faire for drede.
I praye to God spede wele the plough.

To paye the ffiftene agenst our ease,
Beside the lordys rente of our londe;
Thus be we shepeshorne, we maynst chese,
And yet it is full lytell y understonde.
Then bayllys and bedell woll put to there hande,
In enquestis to doo us sorowe inough,
But yf we quite right wele the londe.
I praye to God spede wele the plough.

* * * *

Then come the gray ffreres and make their mone,
And call for money our soulis to save.
Then come the white ffreres and begyn to grone,
Whete or barley they woll fayne have.

Then cometh the freres augustynes and begynneth to crave
Corne or chese, for they have not inough.
Then cometh the black freres which wolde fayne have.
I praye to God spede wele the plough.

* * * *

Then cometh prestis that goth to Rome,
For to have silver to singe at Scala Celi.
Than cometh clerkys of Oxford and mak their mone,
To her scole hire they most have money.
Then cometh the tipped-staves for the marshalsé,
And saye they have prisoners mo than inough.
Than cometh the mynstrells to make us gle.
I praye to God spede wele the plough."

In the same volume there is a song in praise of the "worthi cité," of which a verse may serve as a sample:

"Stronge be the walls abowte the stondis;
Wise be the people that within the dwelles;
Freshe is thy river with his lusti strandes;
Blithe be thy chirches, well sownyng are thy belles;
Rich be thy marchauntis in substaunce that excells;
Faire be thy wives, right lovesom white and small;
Clere be thy virgyns, lusty under kellys.
London, thou art the flowre of cities all."

The inclosing of common lands, in the time of Edw. VI, seems to have created a very general feeling of discontent. In the library of Corpus College, Cambridge, we have two MS. copies of songs on this subject.

The political poetry of the reigns of Mary* and Elizabeth is perhaps the least interesting of any period of our history.

* There are, however, two or three libellous ballads of Mary's reign in existence; one, in the Corpus College library before mentioned, was made on the report of her pregnancy.

There are, however, many good historical ballads of this time preserved, and not a few have been printed by Evans and Percy. We will pass them over, to give room for a satirical ballad against the Scottish adventurers who migrated into England to seek their fortunes under the first of the Stuarts.

"Well met, Jockie, whether away?
Shall we two have a worde or tway?
Thow was so lousie the other day,
How the devill comes thow so gay?
Ha ha ha, by sweet St. An,
Jockie is grown a gentleman!*

Thy shoes that thow wor'st when thow wenst to plow,
Were made of the hyde of a Scottish cow.
They are turnd into Spanish leather now,
Bedeckt with roses, I know not how.

Thy stockings that were of a northerne blew,
That cost not past 12d. when they were new,
Are turnd into a silken hew,
Most gloriously to all mens vew.

Thy belt that was made of a white leather thonge,
Which thow and thy father ware so longe,
Are turnd to hangers of velvet stronge,
With golde and pearle embroydred amonge.

Thy garters that were of the Spanish say,
Which from the taylor thow stollst away,
Are now quite turnd to silk, they say,
With great broade laces fayre and gay.

* The burden is repeated after every stanza,

Thy doublet and breech that were so playne,
On which a louse could scarse remayne,
Are turnd to sattin, God a mercie brayne,
That thow by begging couldst this obtayne.

Thy cloake which was made of a home-spun thread,
Which thow wast wonte to flinge on thy bed,
Is turnd into a skarlet red,
With golden laces about thee spread.

Thy bonnet of blew which thow wor'st hether,
To keep thy skonce from wind and wether,
Is throwne away the devill knowes whether,
And turnd to a bever hat and feather.

Westminster Hall was covered with lead,
And so was St. John many a day;
The Scotchmen have begd it to buy them bread;
The devill take all such Jockies away!"

About this time the manners of society in England appear to have experienced a very perceptible change; and the reign of James is perhaps the time at which we may date the decline of what is so expressively termed the "old English hospitality." The change is not unfrequently alluded to in the popular poetry of the day. There is an old black-letter ballad expressly on this subject, which is entitled, "Time's Alteration, or the old man's rehearsal, what brave days he knew a great while agone, when his old cap was new." We give a few verses of this ballad.

* * * *

"Good hospitality
Was cherished then of many:
Now poor men starve and die,
And are not help'd by any;

For charity waxeth cold,
And love is found in few:
This was not in time of old,
When this old cap was new.

Wherever you travell'd then,
You might meet on the way
Brave knights and gentlemen,
Clad in their country gray,
That courteous would appear,
And kindly welcome you:
No puritans then were,
When this old cap was new.

* * * *

A man might then behold,
At Christmas, in each hall,
Good fires to curb the cold,
And meat for great and small:
The neighbours were friendly bidden,
And all had welcome true,
The poor from the gates were not chidden,
When this old cap was new.

Black Jacks to every man
Were fill'd with wine and beer
No pewter pot nor can
In those days did appear:
Good cheer in a nobleman's house
Was counted a seemly shew;
We wanted no brawn nor souse,
When this old cap was new."

So also, in the song of "The Old and Young Courtier," which is printed by Percy, and which was written about this time, the courtier of Queen Elizabeth's days is described as—

"an old worshipful gentleman, who had a greate estate,
That kept a brave old house at a bountiful rate,
And an old porter to relieve the poor at his gate;
Like an old courtier of the queen's,
And the queen's old courtier.

With an old lady, whose anger one word asswages;
They every quarter paid their old servants their wages,
And never knew what belongd to coachmen, footmen, nor pages,
But kept twenty old fellows with blue coats and badges;
Like an old courtier, &c.

* * * * *

With a good old fashion, when Christmasse was come,
To call in all his old neighbours with bagpipe and drum,
With good chear enough to furnish every old room,
And old liquor able to make a cat speak, and man dumb.
Like an old courtier, &c."

The "young courtier" is, on the other hand,

"Like a flourishing young gallant, newly come to his land,
Who keeps a brace of painted madams at his command,
And takes up a thousand pound upon his father's land,
And gets drunk in a tavern, till he can neither go nor stand;
Like a young courtier of the king's,
And the king's young courtier.

* * * * *

With a new fashion, when Christmas is drawing on,
On a new journey to London straight we all must be gone,
And leave none to keep house, but our new porter John,
Who relieves the poor with a thump on the back with a stone;
Like a young courtier, &c."

The reign of the first Charles was one continuous scene of conflict with mouth, pen, and sword. Enthusiasm, which was equally conspicuous in every party, broke through

all restraint; and we find an entirely new spirit infused into the poetry of the day. In place of the stiff and constrained style, with its quaint and stolen conceits, which distinguished most of the *poets* of the preceding reign, we have all at once a style whose characteristic is an extraordinary flow of wit, combined with ease and readiness of expression. The cavaliers were often men of talent and education—they were withal merry fellows; and they at once indulged their hatred of the party which was uppermost, and drowned the vexation which arose from their own mishaps, in satirical and jovial songs. We have always thought, that from the numerous small volumes of poems, many of them anonymous, which were printed during this period, an interesting selection might be made. The third volume of Ellis's *Specimens of the Early English Poets* was, it is true, devoted to the reigns of James and the Charleses; but that book labours under the defect peculiar to all similar works—it is a collection of *authors*, and not of *poetry*. What care we for a long series of obscure names, many of them scarcely known even to their contemporaries, if there is nothing in their works to interest us? We would have a book which should illustrate the poetry of the day —a book which should illustrate the times, and not the authors' names. But, as it is, Ellis's book is any thing but complete: we do not meet with the name even of the clever and witty Dr. Corbet, or of Cleveland, who was looked upon as the "wit of his age," and of whom it was observed, that "he might be said to have lisped wit."

But we will proceed to give a few "ensamples" of the songs we are talking of. Here, then, is a song by a zealous cavalier, from *Songs and Poems of Love and Drollery, by J. W.* (1654).

" *The compounder's song.*

Come, drawers, some wine,
Or we'l pull down your sign;
For we're all jovial compounders.
We'l make the house ring
With healths to the king,
And confusion unto his confounders.

Since Goldsmiths committee
Affords us no pittie,
Our sorrows in wine we will steep 'm;
They forc'd us to take
Two oaths, and we make
A third, that we ne're mean to keep 'm.

And first, who e're sees,
We'l drink on our knees,
To th' king; may they choak that repine:
A fig for the traitors
That look to his waters,
Th' ave nothing to do with our wine.

And next here's a cup
To the queen; fill it up,
Wer't poison we would make an end on't;
May Charles and she meet,
And tread under feet
Anabaptist and independent.

To the prince and all others
His sisters and brothers,
As low in condition as high-born;
We drink this and pray,
That shortly they may
See all those that wrong them at Tyborn.

And now here's three bowles
To all gallant souls,
That for the king did, and will venture;
May they flourish, when those
Who are his and their foes
Are dam'd and ram'd down to the center.

A last let a glasse
To our undoers passe,
Attended with two or three curses;
May plagues sent from hell
Stuff their bodies as well
As cavaliers coyn doth their purses."

The object of the following spirited song is to turn to ridicule the abhorrence in which the fanatical part of their enemies professed to hold games and festivals.

"*A Carol.*

Preethy, Roundhead, now forbear,
Come not near,
Christmas here doth domineer.
Here are sports, and songs, and musick,
Which perhaps,
Which perhaps, sir, may make you sick.

'Twil perplex your holy eye
To espy
When we dance, though modestly.
And you'l hence be more offended;
With the light,
With the light all sport is ended.

And to grieve your godly ear,
Songs I fear
Of our Saviour's birth you'l hear.
Here his mother you'l find sainted,
And yourselves,
And yourselves called divels painted.

If you love your nose, O fie,
Come not nigh,
All the house doth smel of pye.
Nor would you the scent eschew, sir,
Half so fain.
Half so fain as we would you, sir.

For the taste, indeed, here's great
Store of meat,
But your saintship may not eat;
For the meat which we provide all
Offered is,
Offered is unto this idol.

Venture then no farther on,
Get thee gone:
But least thou shouldst go alone,
Take for company, I prethee,
From this place,
From this place all sorrow with thee."

"Alexander Brome," says Winstanley, "addicted himself to a jovial strain in the ravishing delights of poetry; being the ingenious author of most of those songs, which on the royalists' account came forth during the time of the rump, and Oliver's usurpation, and plaid to by the sprightly violin." Of this same person Izaak Walton has given a favorable character in "an humble eglog" prefixed to his collection of poems, which was first published in 1660. The following three stanzas are from a song of his made

"*Upon the Cavaliers departing out of London.*

Now fare thee well, London,
Thou next must be undone,
'Cause thou hast undone us before;

This cause and this tyrant
Had ne'er plaid this high rant,
Were 't not for thy argent and or.

Now we must desert thee,
With the lines that begirt thee,
And the red-coated saints domineer,
Who with liberty fool thee,
While a monster doth rule thee,
And thou feel'st what before thou did'st fear.

But this is our glory
In this wretched story,
Calamities fall on the best;
And those that destroy us
Do better employ us,
To sing till they are supprest."

The last stanza exhibits to us what often appears in these songs, that spirit, unbroken under the pressure of hardships and misfortunes which characterized many of the unfortunate cavaliers. Here is another example, by the same author, written in 1648.

"Come let us be merry,
Drink claret and sherry,
And cast away care and sorrow;
He's a fool that takes thought for tomorrow.
Why should we be droopers,
To save it for troopers?
Let's spend our own,
And when all is gone,
That they can have none,
Then the Roundheads and Cavies agree.

Then fall to your drinking,
And leave off this shrinking;
Let Square-heads and Round-heads go quarrel;
We have no other foe but the barrel;

These cares and disasters
Shall ne'er be our masters;
English and Scot
Do both love a pot,
Though they say they do not,
Here the Roundheads and Cavies agree.

A man that is armed
With liquor, is charmed,
And proof against strength and cunning;
He scorns the base humour of running.
Our brains are the quicker,
When season'd with liquor;
Let's drink and sing,
Here's a health to our king,
And I wish in this thing,
Both the Roundheads and Cavies agree."

The opposite party were in general more given to praying than song-writing, and we have here, therefore, less room for collecting. An old song tells us—

"And if they write in meeter,
They think there's nothing sweeter,
Unless it be old Tom Sternhold."

However, it does appear that there were some among them who could even wield the song as a weapon in political warfare. We may mention Dr. Robert Wild—a name, by the way, which is not to be found in Ellis—"who was one," says Winstanley, "and not of the meanest of the poetical cassock, being in some sort a kind of an anti-Cleaveland, writing as high and standing up as stifly for the Presbyterians, as ever Cleaveland did against them." His poems were "for the most part of a lepid and facetious nature, reflecting on others, who as sharply retorted upon him; for," as Winstanley sagaciously observes, "he that throwes stones at another, 'tis ten to one but is hit with a stone himself." It is probable that most of Wild's

earlier political poems are omitted in the printed collection which came out after the restoration, when he had himself written a panegyric on Monk. The quaint author we have just quoted, speaking of Richard Head, the author of the *English Rogue*, says that, "amongst others, he had a great fancy in bandying against Dr. Wild (although I must confess therein overmatcht), yet he fell upon him tooth and nail." It is very probable, however, that the cavalier poets thought their opponents were in want of assistance —at least they most compassionately volunteered it, as may be seen from the following stanzas, out of many others, written for them in 1643, by that zealous royalist, Alexander Brome.

"*The saints' encouragement.*

Fight on, brave soldiers, for the cause,
Fear not the caveliers;
Their threatnings are as senseless as
Our jealousies and fears.
'Tis you must perfect this great work,
And all malignants slay,
You must bring back the king again
The clean contrary way.

'Tis for religion that you fight,
And for the kingdom's good,
By robbing churches, plundering men,
And shedding guiltless blood.
Down with the orthodoxal train,
All loyal subjects slay;
When these are gone, we shall be blest,
The clean contrary way.

'Tis to preserve his majesty,
That we against him fight,
Nor are we ever beaten back,
Because our cause is right;

If any make a scruple on't,
Our declarations say,
Who fight for us fight for the king,
The clean contrary way."

The following are stanzas out of a song in the person of Anarchus, in a dramatic poem by the celebrated Francis Quarles,

" Know then, my brethren, heav'n is clear,
And all the clouds are gone;
The righteous now shall flourish, and
Good days are coming on:
Come then, my brethren, and be glad,
And eke rejoice with me;
Lawn sleeves and rochets shall go down,
And hey! then up go we!

We'll break the windows which the whore
Of Babylon hath painted,
And when the popish saints are down,
Then Barrow shall be sainted:
There's neither cross, nor crucifix,
Shall stand for men to see;
Rome's trash and trumperies shall go down,
And hey! then up go we!" &c.

Even during these stormy times, we may pick up a few songs which do not partake of their violence. We may instance the following, that exhibits a little of the same spirit of resignation, though under different circumstances, which is so conspicuous in the political songs of the cavaliers:

" When first my free heart was surpriz'd by desire,
So soft was the wound, and so gentle the fire,
My sighes were so sweet, and so plesant the smart,
I pitty'd the slave who had ne'er lost his heart;
He thinks himself happy, and free, but alass!
He is far from that heaven which lovers possess.

In nature was nothing that I could compare
With the beauty of Phillis, I thought her so faire;
A wit so divine all her sayings did fill,
A goddess she seem'd; and I worship'd her still
With a zeal more inflam'd, and a passion more true,
Than a martyr in flames for religion can shew.

With awful respect while I lov'd and admir'd,
But fear'd to attempt what so much I desir'd,
How soon were my hopes and my heaven destroy'd,
A shepherd more daring fell on and enjoy'd:
Yet, in spite of ill fate, and the pains I endure,
I will finde a new Phillis to give me my cure."

The following has a little of the burlesque in it:

" *Maid.*

Charon, Charon, come away,
Bring forth thy boat and oare;
That I poore maid may make no stay,
But rowe me to some shore.

Charon.

Who calls on Charon in such hast,
As if they suffer'd paine:
I carry none but pure and chast,
Such as true love hath slaine.

Maid.

Oh! carry me within thy boat,
I'le tell thee a true love's tale:
With sighs so deep, when as we float,
Shall serve us for a gale.

Charon.

I come, I come, sweet soul, I come,
Thy beautie does so charm me;
Come in my boat, take there a roome,
Nor wind nor raine shall harm thee.

Maid.

And now I am within thy boat,
I'le sing the a true love song:
My eyes shall shed a sea of waves,
To float our boat along."

The first whisper of the restoration was to the cavaliers the signal for universal rejoicing. It was then that Charles Cotton, perhaps from his fishing-house on the banks of his favourite Dove, addressed to his friend Alexander Brome the congratulatory ode beginning with—

" Now let us drink, and with our nimble feet
The floor in graceful measures beat,
Never so fit a time for harmless mirth
Upon the sea-girt spot of earth."

And Brome responded with an equally joyous catch:

" Let's leave off our labour, and now let's go play;
For this is our time to be jolly;
Our plagues and our plaguers are both fled away;
To nourish our griefs is but folly.
He that won't drink and sing
Is a traitor to 's king;
And so he 's that does not look twenty years younger," &c.

A short space of time, however, saw themselves disappointed and their rejoicings damped; and the same poet sings very soon after in this altered strain:

" The poor cavaliers thought all was their own,
And now was their time to sway;
But friends they have few, and money they've none,
And so they mistook their way.
When they seek for preferments, the rebels do rout 'um,
And having no money they must go without 'um,
The courtiers do carry such stomachs about 'um,
They speak no English but " PAY."

And those very rebels that hated the king,
And no such office allow
By the help of their boldness, and one other thing,
Are brought to the king to bow:
And there both pardons and honours they have,
With which they think they're secure and brave;
But the title of knight, on the back of a knave,
Is like saddle upon a sow."

Their spirits, however, bore up against all their crosses, and we soon hear them again singing—

"Give us musick with wine,
And we'll never repine
At prosperous knaves, but defy 'em;
These politick sots
Are still weaving of plots,
So fine, that at last they fall by 'em.

We laugh, and we drink,
And on business ne'er think,
Our voices and hautboys still sounding;
While we dance, play, and sing,
We've the world in a string,
And our pleasure is ever abounding.

Your sober dull knave,
For wise is but grave,
'Tis craft, and not wisdom, employs him.
We nothing design,
But good music and wine,
And blessed is he that enjoys them."

ESSAY XX.

ON THE SCOTTISH POET DUNBAR.

POETRY in England declined rapidly after the time of Chaucer; but the muse seems to have taken refuge in Scotland, where during a period of more than a century appeared several writers of great merit, among whom were even kings and princes. The medieval literature of Scotland was a bare imitation of that of England, which travelled gradually to the North, and in earlier times was merely transferred to the corrupt dialect of that part of the island. One of the earliest of the Scottish poets whose writings were characterized by originality of genius, was king James I, who was a prisoner in England from 1405 to 1425, and whose style appears to have been founded on that of Chaucer. Dunbar followed in the same school, after whom came Kennedy, Gawin Douglas, Sir David Lindsay, king James V, Maitland, Scott, and a number of others of less merit, and many whose productions were not worthy to be remembered. Old Time, the purifier and cleanser-out of all things, has long swept from the garner of Fame much of the chaff of former harvests. But constant sweeping has too often carried away with the chaff part of the grain also, causing

thereby irreparable diminution of those stores which should belong to our heritage. Of the losses which we have thus sustained, no one is more to be lamented than the works of the Scottish poet, William Dunbar: and we owe many thanks to David Laing, for the collection he has given us of what remains of a poet, whose tales may be safely put in the same class with those of Chaucer and Prior, whose odes and songs are not unworthy to stand beside those of Horace, and whose burlesque is as glorious as that of Aristophanes himself.* Dunbar was a first-rate poet; but the circumstance of his having written in the broad Doric dialect of the North, has caused him, like others of his countrymen, to be neglected by us people of the South, whose tongue happens to be formed on the pure West Saxon in which Alfred wrote. We doubt, however, if this very broadness of dialect, though it is a hinderance to his popularity, be not itself a beauty in the kind of subjects in which, to judge by his remains, our Scottish poet has the greatest excellence. But how came such a poet to be neglected in his own country, many of our readers will naturally ask? The history of that country will readily furnish us with an answer. The age during which poetry flourished in Scotland was followed by a long period of barbarism, when taste and genius were drowned, for a time at least, amid the furious waves of party discord and fanatical violence. Before they were calmed, the works of her poets had been destroyed, or the few remnants lay concealed in scattered leaves of manuscript, which had found

* The Poems of William Dunbar, now first collected. With Notes and a Memoir of his Life, by David Laing, 2 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh, 1834,

their way into some private library. Two such manuscripts, one at Edinburgh, the other at Cambridge, contain nearly all that remains of Dunbar.

Dunbar, like Homer, wandered under many a clime, and visited many towns and flourishing cities, without leaving anywhere a testimonial of his presence; his story is not much less obscure than that of the Bard of Chios. He resembles in some measure, both in the allusion he makes to his own fortunes, and in several points of his personal character, the French poet of the thirteenth century, Rutebeuf. He was born, as Mr. Laing tells us, about the middle of the fifteenth century; he seems from an early period of his life to have been destined for the church, and, with that prospect, he was educated at the university of St. Andrew. Afterwards, he assumed the habit of the Franciscan friars, or *mendicants*, and in this garb travelled over most of the western countries of Europe. But the life of a friar was not congenial to Dunbar's disposition, for he seems to have loved the gaiety of a court rather than the wanderings of a mendicant, the name of a "*makkar*" (maker), a term synonymous in every respect with the Greek word *poet* (ποιητὴς), teaching "Venus lawis," as he has it, to that of an itinerant preacher, and accordingly he laid aside his friar's habit "probably at no very advanced period of his life." Nearly all the notices we have left of the events or circumstances of the poet's history, are the allusions to them contained in his poems: in one of them he tells how, in after times, a fiend in the likeness of St. Francis appeared to him in a dream, and desired him to reassume his friar's weeds, and to renounce the world. But Dunbar,—

"By him, and by his habit both y-scared,
Like to a man that with a ghost was marred,"

very civilly declined the proposal, alleging that—

"If ever my fortune was to be a frere,
The date thereof is past full many a year;
For within every lusty town and place
Of all England, from Berwick to Calace,
I oft have in thy habit made good cheer."

At the same time he hints that he would with all willingness accept the robes of a bishop, and that in this garb he should travel to Heaven with great satisfaction:—

"In haly legendis haif I hard allevin,
Ma sanctis of bischeppis, nor freiris, be sic sevin;
Off full few freiris that has bene sanctis, I reid;
Quhairfoir ga bring to me ane bischoppis weid,
Gife evir thow wald my saule yeid unto hevin."

We give this passage in its original Doric, because we are going to quote a paraphrase of it in Latin, from the elegant pen of George Buchanan, whose *somnium* is an imitation of this poem of Dunbar. The terseness and point of the original is, perhaps, rather dissipated in the copy.

"Mentior, aut peragra saxo fundata vetusto
Delubra, et titulos per simulacra lege,
Multus honoratis fulgebit episcopus aris,
Rara cucullato sternitur ara gregi.
Atque inter monachos erit hæc rarissima vestis:
Induat hanc, si quis gaudeat esse miser.

Quod si tanta meæ tangit te cura salutis,
Vis mihi, vis animæ consuluisse meæ?
Quilibet hac alius mendicet veste superbus:
At mihi da mitram, purpureamque togam."

A bishopric, indeed, appears to have been the grand object of Dunbar's ambition in his younger days. But, though he had powerful and princely patrons at court, yet so much more acceptable were his services there as a poet than as a priest, that in his manhood no petitions or expostulations of Dunbar himself, no influence of his friends, could prevail on the king to dispense with his company in that character, or to accede to his earnest solicitations for a benefice. To stop his complaints for a time, the king granted him a pension, to be continued "until he be promoted by our sovereign lord to a benefice," which pension was from time to time increased, as his petitions for preferment were renewed, till we find it raised to the sum of eighty pounds annually, "until he be promoted to a benefice of £100 or above," a good living no doubt at that time. His hopes, however, were not realized, and his solicitations did not cease; and "it is somewhat amusing to consider with what ingenuity and address he varies his petitions. In general, he seems to found his chief claims for preferment upon former services which he had rendered, his youth having been spent in the king's employment, while he intimates that his wants would be easily satisfied. But, whether in the form of a satirical or of a pathetic appeal to the king, or simply as a congratulation on the new year, or whether under some humorous personation he brought forward his request, still the burden of Dunbar's song was a benefice!" It happens that many of his

smaller pieces which remain to us, were written with this object. At a time when many benefices were vacant, and he saw them all bestowed away, and himself passed over, he urgently expostulated to the king, representing to him the injustice of filling some till they burst, whilst others equally deserving, are left empty.

"Sire, at this feast of benefice,
Think that small parts make great service,
And equal distribution
Makes them content who have reason,
And who have none are pleased nowise.

Sire, whether it is almes more
To give him drink that thirsteth sore;
Or fill a full man till he burst;
And let his fellow die for thirst,
Who wine to drink as worthy were?

It is no glad collatiion,
Where one makes merry, another looks down;
One thirsty, another plays 'cup out:'
Let once the cup go round about,
And win the company's benison."

At another time he touches the subject in a more playful mood, and as the queen was his especial friend, and seems to have earnestly wished that his petition might be granted, he prays that the king may be "John Thomson's man," a term then applied to a person whose wife, as the saying is now, "wore the breeches."

"Sire, for your grace both night and day,
Right heartily on my knees I pray,
With all devotion that I can,
God give, ye were John Thompson's man!

For were it so, then well were me,
Un-beneficed I should not be;
My hard fortune were ended than;
God give, ye were John Thomson's man!

Then would some ruth within you rest,
For sake of her, fairest and best
In Britain, since her time began;
God give, ye were John Thomson's man!

For it might hurt in no degree,
That one, so fair and good as shee,
Through her virtue such worship wan,
As you to make John Thomson's man!

I would give all that ever I have
On that condition, so God me save,
That ye had vowed to the swan,
One year to be John Thomson's man.

The mercy of that sweet meek Rose*
Would soften you, Thistle, I suppose,
Whose pricks through me so ruthless ran;
God give, ye were John Thomson's man!

My advocate, both fair and sweet,
The whole rejoicing of my sp'rite,
Would speed well in my errands than;
If ye were once John Thomson's man.

Ever, when I think you hard or dure,
Or merciless in my succour,
Then pray I God and sweet Saint Ann,
Give that ye were John Thomson's man."

* The Rose and the Thistle are alluded to as the well-known emblems of England (the Queen being daughter of Henry VII,) and of Scotland.

Still Dunbar remained at court, where he appears all along to have been a great favourite, and he seems to have entered into all its gaieties. In his account of the "dance in the queen's chamber," he himself makes not the least conspicuous figure in the picture:—

"Then came in *Dunbar* the makkar,
On all the floor there was none frakkar,
And there he danced the Dirrye-danton;
He hopped liked a pillie wanton,
For love of Musgrave, men tell me;
He tript, until he lost his panton,
A merrier dance might no man see."*

In 1513, the king and his nobility fell at Flodden; and after this event nothing is known of Dunbar, though it seems probable that he soon after received from the queen, now regent of the kingdom, the object of his desires, preferment in the church. The latest of his poems which is extant, is assigned to the year 1517, and he is supposed to have died about three years after.

It is not possible to modernize the language of Dunbar's poems in the manner we have modernized most of our extracts, without losing much of their spirit and beauty. We are obliged to retain obsolete phraseology, to substitute for obsolete words, new ones, which do not well supply their places, and we have sometimes to add a word to fill out the rhythm of the line. The rhymes, too, which in Dunbar are always perfect, sometimes suffer in the transformation.

It is to be lamented that so few of Dunbar's larger poems have come down to us. The two tales of "The

* *Frakkar*, more nimble—*panton*, slipper.

Friars of Berwick," and "The Two Married Women and the Widow," are perfect in their kind, and either of them will fully repay the labour—no great labour, indeed, for he is not much more obsolete than Spenser—of making ourselves familiar with his language. His two allegorical poems, the "Thistle and the Rose," written to celebrate the Scottish king's nuptials with the English princess, and the "Golden Targe," have often been the subjects of deserved admiration. We are not ourselves partial to this old allegorical school of poetry; but from the comparative shortness of these poems, the allegory is less tiresome, and their rich luxuriance of description cannot fail to make them favourites. We have another short poem by Dunbar, somewhat in the style of the two last mentioned, "The Merle and the Nightingale." The poet feigns that he hears these two birds, in the month of May, disputing on the subject of love.

"In May, as that Aurora did up-spring,
With cristall ene chasing the cluddis sable,
I hard a Merle, with mirry notis, sing
A sang of love, with voce rycht comfortable,
Agane the orient bemis amiable,
Upone a blissful brenche of lawryr grene;
This wes hir sentens sueit and delectable,
'A lusty lyfe in Luvis service bene.'

Under this brench ran doun a revir bricht,
Of balmy liquor, cristallyne of hew,
Agane the hevinly aisure skyis licht;
Quhair did, upone the tothir syd, persew
A Nychtingaill, with suggurit notis new,
Quhois angell fedderis as the pacok schone;
This wes hir song, and of a sentens trew,
'All Luve is lost bot upone God allone.'

With notis glaid, and glorious armony,
This joyfull Merle so salust scho the day,
Quhill rong the woddis of hir melody,
Saying, 'Awaik, ye luvaris of this May;
Lo! fresche Flora hes flurest every spray,
As Nature hes hir taucht, the noble quene,
The feild bene clothit in a new array;
A lusty lyfe in Luvis service bene.'

Nevir suetar noys wes hard with levand man
Na maid this mirry gentill Nychtingaill,
Hir sound went with the rever as it ran
Out throw the fresche and flureist lusty vaill;
'O Merle!' quoth scho, 'O fule! stynt of thy tail
For in thy song gud sentens is thair none,
For both is tynt, the tyme and the travaill,
Of every Luve bot upone God allone.'"

The Merle, for a time, opposes vigorously the doctrine of her rival songstress, alleging, among other reasons, the following, which is very gracefully expressed,—

"O Nichtingaill! it wer a story nyce
That luve suld nocht depend on cherite;
And, gife that vertew contrair be to vyce,
Than luve mon be a vertew, as thinkis me;
For ay to luve envy mone contrair be:
God bad eik luve thy nichtbour fro the splene,
And *quho than ladeis suetar nychtbouris be?*
A lusty lyfe in Luvis service bene."

She, in the end, however, acknowledges herself beaten, and joins with the nightingale in singing—

"All Luve is lost bot upone God allone."

Dunbar's smaller poems, with the exception of a few moral and religious pieces, are mostly such as were suggested by the times and people among whom he lived. But in elegance and wit, and epigrammatic point, they stand high above the common standard of such productions. The commendation he bestows on the subject of his esteem, or the sarcasms and abuse which he heaps on the objects of his dislike, are equally original and pointed. Among the foremost of the objects of his aversion were the Highlanders. In one of the most magnificent of Dunbar's works, "The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins," a poem which abounds in descriptions such as have been realised only by the pencil and graver of Callot, after noticing the want of musicians, for no "gle-men" were in Hell, "except a menstrall that slew a man," the devil signifies his desire for a Highland "padyane," as the most proper music for the occasion—

"Then cried Mahoun for a Highland padyane:
When ran a fiend to fetch Macfadyane.
Far northward in a nook;
By he the correnoch had made shout,
Erse men so gathered him about,
In Hell great room they took.

These termagants, with tag and tatter,
Full lowd in Erse began to clatter,
And croak like raven and rook.
The devil so deafen'd was with their yell,
That in the deepest pot of Hell
He smothered them with smoke."

In explanation of the last line but one of this passage, it is only needful to observe, that, according to the popular

notion of that time, the souls below were generally punished in *pots* or cauldrons.

Tailors and souters (or shoemakers) had also provoked his displeasure, and he takes ample vengeance on them in his satirical account of "The justs between the Tailor and Souter," held, like the last-mentioned scene, in the infernal domains. The "Amends to the Tailors and Souters," possesses much elegant point. He tells them that he has dreamt, in a moment of inspiration, that an angel appeared to him, declaring aloud their praise, and proclaiming their merits before God.

"The cause to you is not un-ken'd,
That God's mis-makes ye do amend,
By craft and great agility:
Tailors and souters, blest are ye.

Souters, with shoes well made and meet,
Ye mend the faults of ill-made feet,
Wherefore to heaven your souls will flie:
Tailors and souters blest are ye,
* * * *
And tailors, too, with well-made clothes,
Can mend the worst-made man that goes,
And make him seemly for to see:
Tailors and souters, blest are ye.

Though God make a mis-fashioned man,
Ye can him all shape new again.
And fashion him better by 'sic thre:'
Tailors and souters, blest are ye.
* * * *
Of God great kindness may ye claim,
Who help his people from crook and lame,
Supporting faults with your supplie:
Tailors and souters, blest are ye.

On earth ye show such miracles here,
In heaven ye shall be saints full clear,
Though ye be knaves in this countrie:
Tailors and souters, blest are ye."

Another especial object of Dunbar's satire, was "Mr. Andro Kennedy," "an idle dissolute scholar," whose testament commences thus—

"I maister Andro Kennedy,
Curro quando sum vocatus,
Begotten by some incubi,
Or by some friar *infatuatus;*
In faith I cannot tell read'ly,
Unde aut ubi fui natus,
But in truth I know truly,
Quod sum diabolus incarnatus.
* * * *
Nunc condo testamentum meum,
I leave my soul for evermare,
Per omnipotentem Deum,
Unto my lordés wine-cellar.
* * * *
Quia in cellario cum cervisia
I'd rather lye both early and late,
Nudus solus in camisia,
Than in my lordés bed of state.
A barrel bung aye at me bosom,
Of worldés goods I had na mare;
Et corpus meum ebriosum
I leave unto the town of Air;
In a grain mixen for ever and aye,
Ut ibi sepeliri queam,
Where drink and grain may every day
Be casten *super faciem meam.*"

The ceremonies at his interment are to be equally characteristic—

"*In die meæ sepulturæ,*
I will none have but our own gang,
Et duos rusticos de rure
Bearing a barrel on a stang;
Drinking and playing 'cup out,' even
Sicut egomet solebam;
Singing and shouting with high steven,
Potum meum cum fletu miscebam.
I will no priests for me to sing
'*Dies illa, dies iræ;*'
Nor yet the bells for me to ring;
Sicut semper solet fieri;
But a bag-pipe to play a spring,
Et unum ale-wosp *ante me;*
Instead of banners, for to bring
Quatuor lagenas cervisiæ;
Within the grave to set such thing
In modum crucis juxta me,
To drive the fiends, then boldly sing,
De terra plasmasti me."

Mr. Laing observes on this last poem:—

"The late Octavius Gilchrist, in his remarks on macaronic poetry (Brydges' Censura Literaria, vol. III. p. 359), in mentioning Theophilus Folengo of Mantua, known best under his assumed name of Merlinus Coccaius, as the supposed inventor of that kind of verse, in his 'Opus Macaronicum,' first published in 1517, says, 'he was preceded by the laureat Skelton, whose works were printed in 1512, who was himself anticipated by the great genius of Scotland, Dunbar, in his 'Testament of Andro Kennedy,' and the last must be considered as the reviver or introducer of

macaronic or burlesque poetry. The opinion, however, is not quite correct, as the mixture either of Latin and English words, or in alternate lines, as used by Skelton and Dunbar, does not constitute what is called macaronic verse, the peculiarity of which consists in the use of Latin words, and of vernacular words with Latin terminations, usually in hexameter verse. One of the earliest and most celebrated pieces of the kind which is known in this country, is Drummond of Hawthornden's Polemo-Middinia."

Mr. Laing is doubtlessly right in saying that Dunbar's poem is not macaronic verses. How Gilchrist could think that this kind of writing, alternate lines of Latin and English, was not older than Dunbar, we cannot conceive. We might make a collection of some twenty or thirty songs in the same style, from the twelfth century to Dunbar's time; and such a song in Latin and old High Dutch, on an event of the tenth century, preserved in a MS. of the middle of the eleventh century, which begins

"*Nunc almus assis filius*
thero euuigero thiernum
Benignus fautor miki
thaz ig iz cosan muozi,"

has been printed more than once. As, however, Mr. Laing did not seem to be aware that macaronic poetry is of old date in England, we will, in conclusion, print a short macaronic poem from a MS. of the reign of Henry VI, (at Cambridge), describing quaintly the characteristic commodities of most of our English cities. The language is in parts obscure:—

Lundon.

Hæc sunt Lundonis, pira, pomaque, regia thronus,
Chepp stupha, coklana, dolum, leo, verbaque vana,
Lancea cum scutis: hæc sunt staura cuntutis.

Eborac.

Capitulum, kekus, porcus, fimus Eboracus,
Stal, nel, lamprones, kelc et melc, salt, salamones,
Ratus cum petys: hæc sunt staura cuntetis.

Lincoln.

Hæc sunt Lincolnæ, bow, bolt, et bellia bolnæ,
Ac monstrum scala, rosa bryghta, nobilis ala,
Et bubulus flatus: hæc sunt staura cuntatis.

Norwicus.

Hæc sunt Norwicus, panis ordeus, halpenypykys,
Clausus porticus, domus Habrahæ, dyrt quoque vicus,
Flynt valles, rede thek: cuntatis optima sunt hæc.

Coventr.

Contreye mirum sopanedula, tractaque wirum,
Et carmen notum, nova stipula, pedula totum,
Cardones mille: hæc sunt insignia villæ.

Brystoll.

Hæc sunt Brystollys, bladelys, doȝelys quoque bollys,
Burges, negones, karinæ, clocheriaque, chevones,
Webbys cum rotis: hæc sunt staura cuntotis.

Cantuar.

Hæc sunt Cantorum, juga, dogmata, bal baculorum,
Et princeps tumba, bel, brachia, fulsaque plumba,
Et syserem potus: hæc sunt staura cuntotis.

THE END.

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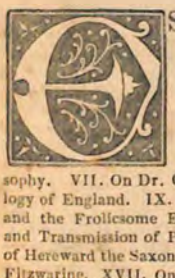

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